

UNLV

MAGAZINE

FALL 2009

GREENSPUN COLLEGE OF
URBAN AFFAIRS

The Promise of Partnership

UNLV, The Lincy Institute, and Brookings Mountain West tackle the region's sustainability issues from their new home base in Greenspun Hall



Green Jobs

UNLV became the epicenter for discussion of the green economy at the National Clean Energy Summit in August. Approximately 900 leaders from around the country attended the event, which focused on developing a clean energy economy. From left: UNLV President Neal Smatresk; John Podesta, president and CEO of the Center for American Progress; former U.S. Vice President Al Gore; U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada; and energy executive and financier T. Boone Pickens. [Photo by Geri Kodey]

Read about UNLV sustainability initiatives and their link to Southern Nevada's development --> [page 22](#)

CLEAN MMIT 2.0: NEW ECONOMY



UNLV MAGAZINE

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ON THE COVER:

Greenspun Hall,
the new home of
The Lincy Institute
and the Brookings
Mountain West
initiative.

[Photo by Geri Koday]

The Promise of Partnership

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the Future is NOW

AS DIRECTOR OF UNLV'S ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, CLAYTEE WHITE CAPTURES THE VOICES OF JAZZ MUSICIANS, FORMER SHOWGIRLS, AND LAS VEGAS PIONEERS, PRESERVING THEIR STORIES. HER RESEARCH CENTER — FUNDED PARTIALLY BY PRIVATE SUPPORT — CONNECTS YESTERDAY'S MEMORIES, TODAY'S COMMUNITY, AND TOMORROW'S HISTORY.

HER RESEARCH IS INVENTING THE FUTURE. THE FUTURE IS NOW.



Invent the Future
THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

campaign.unlv.edu

A special place

In August, I was asked by the Board of Regents to serve as UNLV's ninth president. I accepted its offer with the same excitement and zeal I had when I arrived here as provost two years ago.

UNLV is a special place, and the opportunity we have to move this institution forward is as energizing as it will be rewarding.

I believe that UNLV is more than just in Las Vegas.

We are truly a part of this great city and are committed to forming partnerships that make a difference. On page 22, you can read more about two new ventures with The Lincy Foundation and Brookings Institution that are expanding our ability to serve the community and boosting our stature on a national level.

These recent developments — and a few others that will be announced shortly — point to a simple yet undeniable fact: In order for us to be successful, we need help from all our community leaders and friends. So, I am asking all Nevadans to embrace our research and scholarship and to work with us to diversify our economy, develop our human capital and social systems, and create the critical infrastructure that Nevada needs for a sustainable future.



Even though we are facing tough economic times, **we remain committed to a vision and mission that links Nevada's future prosperity to our core activities on campus.**

UNLV is:

- Making student learning and success the cornerstone for all that we do. It is imperative that we prepare our best minds to serve the leadership needs of our region and give our graduates the practical skills they need to be productive, active, and engaged citizens.
- Strengthening our current and emerging research to improve our national reputation, to foster the economic and social development of our region, and to contribute to the national and international dialogue among scholars.
- Creating stronger partnerships with other public and private research entities in the state to improve our impact on economic development for Nevada.
- Ensuring that equity, diversity, and inclusiveness are inherent in every decision.
- Supporting the development of the human capital, regional infrastructure, and economic diversification that Nevada needs for a sustainable future.

UNLV is an institution born of this dynamic city. It embraces and embodies the entrepreneurial, innovative, and unconventional spirit of the community and brings that passion to our teaching and research programs. **I hope you will join us as partners in building UNLV and investing in the future of Nevada.**

If you have thoughts, ideas, or suggestions you would like to share, please contact me at president@unlv.edu.

Thank you for your support,
Neal Smatresk
President

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THE Flashlight

QUOTABLE



“My new acquaintances could not use their nationality as a shield.

They had no white American friends to hide behind ...

When it came down to it, those police officers and soldiers saw me as black, but my white colleagues gave me credibility.

And that made all the difference.”

— **Kareema Mitchell Turner**, Boyd School of Law student on her eye-opening experience while touring a refugee camp in South Africa. Turner spent seven weeks at a University of Witwatersrand program for human rights law.

From the June 12 entry of her blog at frombrightlightstobigcity.blogspot.com.



LaVerne Autagne's classes at UNLV have included creative writing, religious history, and a 300-mile rafting trip down the Colorado River.

Perpetual student

Senior adult programs give lifelong learner an outlet for curiosity

LaVerne Autagne delayed earning her college degree for two decades. Now she can't bring herself to stop learning. The 68-year-old has taken classes such as Al Esbin's *Religion: A Historical Perspective* and Sharon Proehl's *Creative Writing*. Will the courses — in the familiar phrase of parents worried their children are not practical enough when it comes to majors — “lead to anything”?

Who cares? “I'm just going to be a perpetual student,” she says. “The curiosity is just never sated.”

She's done all her coursework, and more, through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UNLV. Part of a network of institutes around the country, the UNLV institute was funded by a gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation. It provides intellectually stimulating programs for people over 50 who want to stay active and keep their minds sharp — in short, for people like LaVerne Autagne.

“I've looked for lifelong learning programs all along,” she says. “When I got to Las Vegas, I looked for it again, and this is the best group I've ever found. It's a wonder to me that more people don't know about it.”

Nevada, with its dry, sunny climate and lack of state income tax, has long been a prime destination for retirees. Autagne found her way to Las Vegas in 2000,

when she and her husband, Tom, moved here to be with one of their two daughters. When he died of liver cancer in 2005, she says, “I knew I needed an outlet. I went in and joined (OLLI) immediately.”

OLLI doesn't just operate in the classroom. As a partner with UNLV Educational Outreach, it offers excursions at discounted rates to interested seniors. A year ago, Autagne jumped at the chance to raft the Colorado River with a group of 20 from OLLI.

The 300-mile trip from Lee's Ferry, Ariz., to South Cove at Lake Mead took eight days. They stopped twice a day to hike and set up tents at night. Autagne was the oldest one on the trip. She couldn't get enough of it.

“I climbed rocks. I hiked open areas. You bathed in the river. The guides set up Port-a-Potties,” she says. “It was absolutely the trip of a lifetime.”

So you don't need to convince Autagne that OLLI and programs like it are a worthy investment. She's sold. “This gives retirees a chance to get back into peer groups, keep expanding their minds, maybe start learning skills they've never tried before,” she says. “The value is in keeping people alert and active and knowing there's still a purpose to their lives.”

— GREG LACOUR

More info: Visit seniorprogram.unlv.edu to learn more about OLLI and other UNLV programs for older adults.

Bright Green Future UNLV is helping students gain a competitive edge in landing green jobs.

This fall students can minor in solar and renewable energy. The minor, made possible by a \$500,000 gift from NV Energy, will focus on solar and renewable energy utilization, sustainable building design, and global environmental challenges.

The gift also includes funding for scholarships,

undergraduate research opportunities, demonstration equipment, and internships.

"The solar and renewable energy minor is an ideal industry-education partnership that will provide our students with career opportunities in the booming green job market and supply the workforce needed to support the alternative energy industry in our state and community," says Tom Piechota, UNLV director of sustainability and multidisciplinary research.

Multimedia Learning Research explores the natural attraction that kids with autism have for computers

Old-school thinking: Put special-needs students in a separate classroom. Design lessons just for them. It's better for them, and for the "regular" students.

Of course, society doesn't work that way. With a few exceptions, once they're out of school, people with learning disabilities, mental retardation, or autism are on their own. What shelters children in school can inhibit them in life.

Jason Travers, a 30-year-old doctoral student and visiting lecturer in the nationally recognized department of special education, believes educators can do better. He believes early stimulation of kids with special needs will offer them a better chance of performing in classrooms and in the world outside of them.

So for his dissertation, he's comparing the way autistic kids from ages 3 to 6 learn from teachers, using the traditional lecture model, and when they use an interactive software program he's written.

Last fall, Travers' research received a boost from a \$1,000 Doug Sperber Research Grant from the College of Education. It's named after a student who died weeks before he started his doctoral program. The university's Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders reviewed several proposals before selecting Travers for the grant.

Without the money, his dissertation would be far narrower in scope. He can glean all kinds of data from his software program, which provides basic lessons in the alphabet. But he has to collect data from classrooms, too. He's using the grant money to buy video

cameras. Without them, he could monitor only a handful of students. With them, he can study 30 or 40, a far more meaningful sample.

Past studies show that multimedia learning benefits all children, but especially those with autism. "They typically have difficulty attending to important things going on around them," Travers says. "They also have a natural disposition toward computers, much more than when they're passive participants. No one really knows why."

It's taken Travers a long time to get to where he is. After graduating from Eldorado High in 1997, the Las Vegas native worked construction. "I wanted to do something more gratifying," he says. His mother's experience as a pediatric nurse led him to consider working with special-needs kids, and eventually to UNLV bachelor's and master's degrees. He then worked as a teacher with the Clark County School District.

The father of three can easily imagine parents with an autistic child running up monstrous debt paying for specialized care. He hopes his research leads to easily accessible teaching tools.

— GREG LACOUR



Jason Travers' research on autism got a big boost from a small grant made in memory of another graduate student.

BRIEFLY

Marking a Milestone

Nearly 9,000 miles from Las Vegas, a group of UNLV students donned caps and gowns at a historic June graduation ceremony. The inaugural commencement for UNLV Singapore was a milestone for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, which partnered with Singapore to expand its world-renowned brand of hospitality management education.

Thirty-four students received bachelor's degrees in hotel administration while seven earned executive master's degrees. The campus now has more than 200 students enrolled.

The Singapore Workforce Development Agency recently designated UNLV Singapore as a center for continuing education and training. The agency also provided funding for UNLV to help laid-off professionals in other industries transition to roles in the hospitality industry.

Next up: The Hotel College may become the anchor tenant of a new hospitality education campus in the United Arab Emirates.

DON'T MISS IT
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• **The Black Mountain Institute's** fall events include lectures by author E.L. Doctorow; U.S. Poet Laureate Kay Ryan; and chef Alice Waters with food scholar Raj Patel and writer David Mas Masumoto. blackmountaininstitute.org

• **University Forum** presents talks this semester on such topics as the immunization debate among moms; condemnation of Galileo; and Baz Luhrman's *Australia*. liberalarts.unlv.edu/calendar

• **The Public Lands Institute** is organizing volunteer clean-up programs at such natural treasures as Red Rock Canyon, Lake Mead, and Desert National Wildlife Refuge. It's also organizing the Christmas bird count and World Conservation Day events. publiclands.unlv.edu

• **Ecologist and noted Nevada photographer** Gary Reese's photo exhibit, "A State of Change," shows at the Barrick Museum through Oct. 30. It is free and open to the public Monday-Saturday. barrickmuseum.unlv.edu



(Left) Anna Bracken, wife of Las Vegas's first postmaster, on the porch of their Las Vegas ranch home, around 1905.

(Below, left) Train wreck at Desert Wells



Transient Times

Small-town life during the rise and fall of Southern Nevada's mining industry is chronicled through rarely seen newspaper clippings, photos, and letters in a digital library collection, *Southern Nevada: The Boomtown Years 1900-1925*.

Peter Michel, director of University Libraries' Special Collections, says the site "helps explain why Las Vegas grew into the city it is today. The transient culture of people moving to the West

to make their fortune and then leave is deep-rooted in Las Vegas history."

Funded through a \$95,000 state grant, the project was a collaboration between Special Collections, the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society, and Clark County Heritage Museum. The interactive site features more than 4,000 items as well as teaching resources.

Visit digital.library.unlv.edu/boomtown.

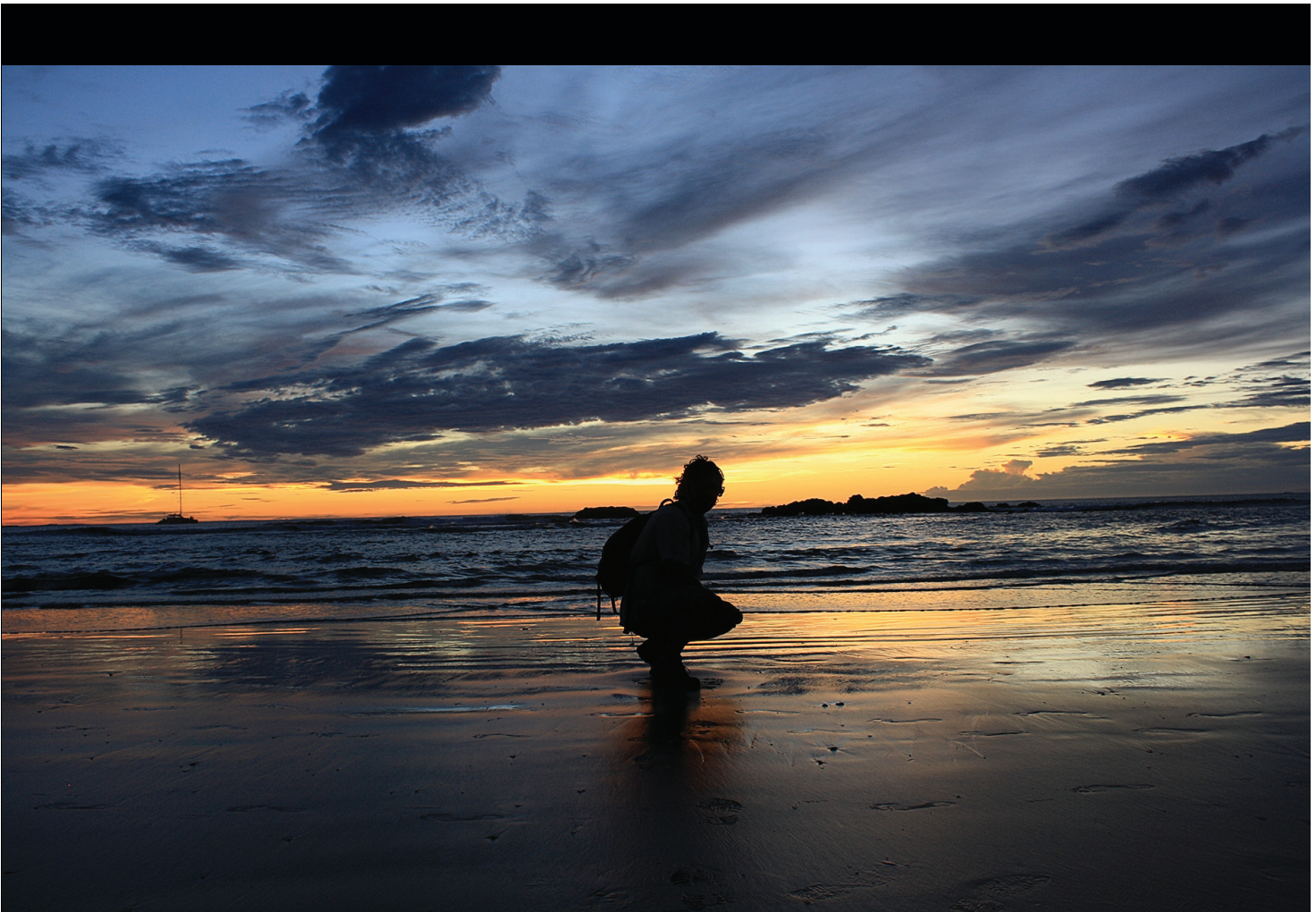
Degreening the Emerald

UNLV is getting kudos for turning its "emerald in the desert," as the campus was once dubbed, into a more conscientious display of desert-friendly landscaping. The facilities team took first and second place in the Southern Nevada Water Authority's annual landscape competition for recent turf-conversion and re-landscaping projects.

The award-winning projects are just the latest

in the university's effort to reduce water use on campus grounds. Since 2001, UNLV has converted more than 855,000 square feet of turf to water-smart landscaping, a savings of up to 45 million gallons of water each year.

More info: UNLV's 332-acre campus is a designated state arboretum. Visit facilities.unlv.edu/landscape for self-guided tour information.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The Tool:

A 2002 Minuteman backpack by Northface, methodically packed with quick-dry clothing, Chacos sandals, and a pair of jeans for “dressier events.” Plus: Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soap (“Cleans everything, just like the bottle claims”), Ciprofloxacin (for that traveler’s diarrhea thing), and several pounds of books (apparently his social theory texts aren’t yet available on a Kindle).

The User:

Mark Salvaggio, doctoral student in sociology and graduate assistant for UNLV’s Urban Sustainability Initiative

This summer Salvaggio spent 10 weeks in Central and South America exploring the little-researched niche of backpacker tourism from a sustainability perspective. “Where tourism isn’t so developed, backpackers are providing opportunities for tourism to locals,” he says. “They provide economic opportunities for places outside the main tourist enclaves.” Salvaggio returned with insights on how hostels — once just a place to sleep before embarking on the next adventure — are changing to accommodate backpackers. More and more, hostels are organizing trips to less-frequented locations and providing amenities such as Internet access.



Thanks to a new community outreach program and support from the Alumni Association, kids from Cunningham Elementary will get to attend this year's homecoming game. The Adopt-A-School program is providing tickets as a reward for excelling in a reading program.

Homecoming is for future Rebels, too

UNLV, Alumni Association reward elementary students through Adopt-A-School program

Some of the Las Vegas Valley's most deserving youth are getting a big dose of Rebel pride during this year's homecoming week.

UNLV is piloting an Adopt-A-School program that pairs the campus community with Cunningham Elementary School, where many of the students are homeless or living below the poverty line.

ALUMNI STEP UP

The Alumni Association has donated 100 Rebel Fun Packs to reward students who are excelling in Cunningham's accelerated reading program. The association is challenging alumni, donors, and friends of the university to send more high-achieving students to the game by matching its contribution.

The \$50 Rebel Fun Pack is for the Oct. 17 homecoming game. The students will get four game tickets and a voucher for hot dogs and

drinks. Cunningham Elementary also receives \$5 for every Fun Pack sold, and each student will receive a T-shirt.

"This project is a wonderful opportunity for the university community to encourage the students at Cunningham Elementary School to make education a top priority," says Lisa Story, Alumni Association board member. "If we can inspire these students to strive for excellence, hopefully they will continue their educational pursuits and become future UNLV students and alumni."

Seventy percent of the students at Cunningham Elementary, which is located near Sam Boyd Stadium, are on free or reduced lunch. "Cunningham is located very close to the campus of UNLV, yet for some students, the reality of attending college seems so far away," says principal Stacey Scott-Cherry.

"This will be the first time that many of these students and their families have been exposed to a collegiate event," says Earnest Phillips, UNLV director of marketing and public relations. "My hope is that the enthusiasm of the campus community will rub off and provide a memorable experience for each of these youngsters."

BEYOND THE GAME

The program also serves as a way for alumni, faculty, staff, and students to give back to the community that supports the university. The homecoming committee and the Rebel Pride Council are planning a book drive for Cunningham's accelerated reading program. Additionally, UNLV athletes will visit the school throughout the year. Other activities are in the planning stages.

"I am so excited about this partnership and what it will offer our most deserving students," Scott-Cherry says. "Not only will this partnership help strengthen our library, it will also help connect our students with our local university. Teaming with the university helps us expand our accelerated reading book collection, which will allow students to better participate in the reading program."

The Adopt-A-School program was developed by a homecoming subcommittee with representatives from UNLV athletics, admissions, marketing and public relations, alumni relations, the Alumni Association, the Rebel Pride Council, and the office of civic engagement and diversity.

More info: To learn more about Homecoming events and the Adopt-A-School program, go to homecoming.unlv.edu.

HOMECOMING HONOREES

The UNLV Alumni Association bestows its top honors on notable Rebels each year during its annual homecoming dinner. This year's award winners are:

Outstanding Alumnus: **George J. Maloof Jr.**, '88 BS Hotel Administration, has established himself as an innovator in the hotel and gaming industries and has been the seminal force behind the gaming and hotel division of Maloof Cos., a group of business ventures including sports and multimedia entertainment. A member of the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees, he has been the visionary behind the building and growth of the Palms Casino Resort.

Silver State Honoree: The recipient of the association's top award for community members, **Thalia Dondero** has been an education advocate throughout her career in public service in Las Vegas. She



MALOOF



DONDERO



DONOHUE

was the first female commissioner elected in Clark County, chairing the commission three times in her 10-year tenure. From 1996 to 2008, Dondero served on the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents and chaired the board for two consecutive terms.

Outstanding Faculty Member: Psychology professor **Bradley Donohue** is director of UNLV's

Achievement Center for the investigation of family behavior therapy for substance abuse and its associated problems. A \$4,000 seed gift from the Alumni Association in 1998 helped launch the center. He conducts research on HIV prevention and treatment for child-neglecting and drug-abusing mothers and their families.

College Alumni of the Year

Business: Garren Sepede, '84 BS Finance, branch manager of Strategic Wealth Management Group

Education: Carolyn G. Goodman, '73 MS Counseling, president and founder, The Meadows School

Engineering: Doa J. Meade, '98 BS Engineering, manager of engineering services, Las Vegas Valley Water District

Fine Arts: Jerry Thompson, '01 BA Film Studies, director, cinematographer, and editor (see "Lightening Strikes," page 32)

Hotel Administration: Bob Boughner, chief operating officer, Borgata

Law: Michael Higdon, '01 JD, law professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Liberal Arts: Sam Lieberman, '96 BS Social Work, chair, Nevada State Democratic Party

Sciences: Ray D. Rawson, '64 BS zoology and chemistry and '78 MA physical anthropology, dentist and member of the NSHE Board of Regents

Urban Affairs: Julie A. Murray, '82 BA and '94 MA Communications, president & CEO, Three Square Food Bank (see story, page 36)

BRIEFLY

Set our records straight

The Alumni Association is going electronic and needs your contact information — especially your e-mail address — to keep you informed of issues and activities affecting your alma mater. The association is using a new electronic tool to send:

- Electronic editions of *Alumni News*, which are replacing the traditional print versions.
- The Alumni Flash, an e-mail containing time-sensitive information or announcements.

Visit alumni.unlv.edu/ **update** to update your contact information. You can also submit updates for *UNLV Magazine's* Class Notes section with this online form.

Association adds to benefits program

UNLV Alumni Association membership has its privileges — from building lasting relationships within the community to a broad range of direct discounts. The association has improved its member benefits with a number of new programs:

• **Rewards card:** Show your Rebel pride when you use your credit card customized with a photo of Hey Rebel!. Every time you use your UNLV Rewards card, you'll earn points toward cash back, free travel with no blackout dates, and merchandise. Using the card for UNLV event tickets earns bonus points. Meanwhile the association will benefit from your support.

• **Career assistance:** Association members can get assistance in launching their careers and achieving professional success through a new partnership with Experience.com. The company offers access to

exclusive job postings from fellow alumni and networking tools. Members also have access to all the programs of UNLV Career Services department, including on-campus recruiting events.

• **National discounts:** The Savings Connection program provides association members easy access to nationwide discounts. The online "mega mall" benefits include discounts at more than 100 retailers — including Target.com, Lands' End, The Body Shop — as well as hotel, car rental, travel packages, and movie theaters.

The association offers dozens of more benefits programs, including discounts for UNLV events and services, scholarships for children of alumni, and discounted tuition for continuing education classes.

More info: Visit alumni.unlv.edu to become a member and to learn more about the tangible benefits and intangible rewards of supporting your alma mater.

BRIEFLY
.....

Gondo honored

Former basketball star and sports announcer Glen "Gondo" Gondrezick was posthumously inducted into the Nevada Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame in August.

Gondrezick died at age 53 on April 27, seven months after having a heart transplant.

One of Jerry Tarkanian's first recruits, Gondrezick was a star on the Runnin' Rebels team that advanced to its first NCAA Final Four in 1977. His jersey, No. 25, was retired in 1997. He played for the NBA's Knicks and Nuggets from 1977 to 1983.

Gondrezick would later return to UNLV, spending the past 17 seasons as a radio and television analyst for his alma mater.



Omar Clayton

QUARTERBACK • Junior, political science • Two-time academic All-MWC

Hometown: Normal, Ill.

Future: Law school.

On the field: Set school record for consecutive pass attempts without an interception (173) in 2008. In his first game as a starter, against Colorado State as a freshman, he became the first Rebel to throw for at least 300 yards and rush for at least 100 yards in the same game.

Balance: "I compartmentalize. I don't bring football to the classroom, and I don't bring the classroom to the football field."

Injuries: Missed the final three games of 2008 with a knee injury and the final two games of 2007 with a fractured hand. "My injuries were flukes, but the coaches have stressed the importance of protecting myself more and taking hits the right way."

Best moment: "When I quarterbacked my high school team to a 14-0 record and a state championship. I also was able to throw the ball to my brother, which made it even sweeter."

Toughest moment: The loss last year to San Diego State — even though he wasn't playing. "It was painful to see the emotions on the faces of the seniors, knowing that for many it was the last football game they would ever play."

Wolfe on Clayton: "He is the most dynamic quarterback in the conference. He is able to do so many different things and do them well. His decision-making process has come a long way."



“B.S.”?

The 54 B.S. on the eye black stickers of Ryan Wolfe (left) is in honor of sophomore line-backer Bryce Saldi. In July, Saldi suffered a severe brain injury in a skateboarding accident that left him in the intensive care unit of a California hospital for a month and a half. He was transferred to a hospital closer to his Texas home on Sept. 4. For updates on Saldi's condition, visit caringbridge.org/visit/Brycesaldi.

Dynamic Duo

The season is in full swing and the Rebels are striving to reach their first bowl game since 2000. Two of the team's top players, quarterback Omar Clayton and wide receiver Ryan Wolfe, talk about how they handle the pressure and how a devastating loss last season is helping the team.

Ryan Wolfe

WIDE RECEIVER • Graduate student, sports education leadership • '09 BS Kinesiology

Hometown: Santa Clarita, Calif.

On the field: Two-time first-team All-MWC. UNLV career leader in receptions, yards, and 100-yard receiving games. One of 30 candidates for the 2009 Lowe's Senior CLASS Award.

Greatest insecurity: “Not living up to expectations. There is going to be a lot more eyes on the team and me this year.”

Best moment: “My junior year in high school, we won the (California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section) championship. We played Mission Viejo High School, whose quarterback was (future first-round NFL draft pick) Mark Sanchez.”

Toughest moment: “The loss to San Diego State to end last season. We had a chance to become bowl eligible. We had won the two previous games and got a little too comfortable. As a team, the loss helped us learn how to handle success.”

Biggest challenge: “Becoming more of a leader. In previous years, I was always trying to prove myself. I have proven myself, but now I need to be a leader.”

Future: Wants to be an athletic director.

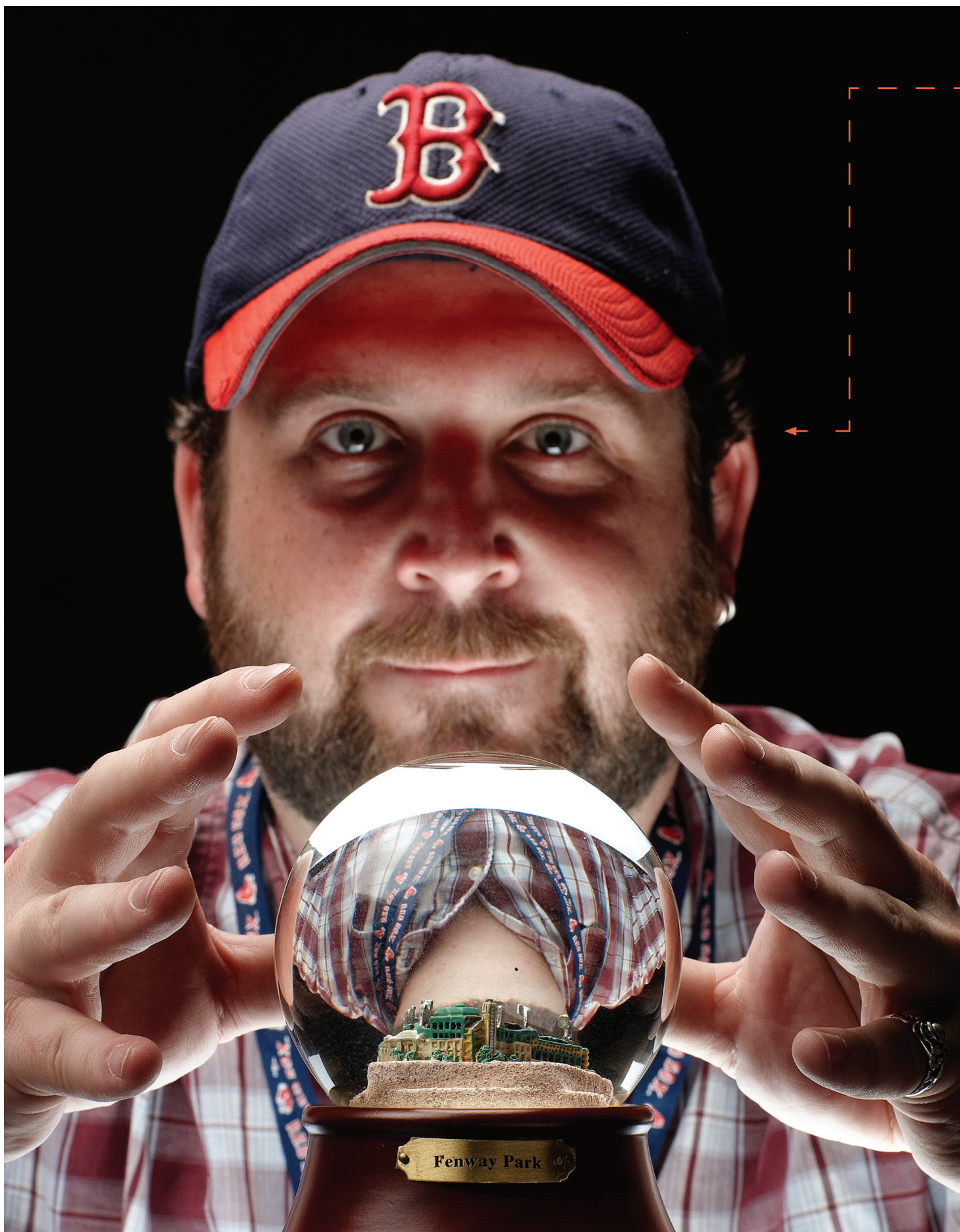
Clayton on Wolfe: “Ryan hardly ever does anything wrong on the field. He runs perfect routes and catches the ball when we get it to him. That makes a quarterback's job so much easier. It's very rare for us to not be on the same page.”

BRIEFLY

ALSO ...

- **Jerry Koloskie** was appointed interim athletic director in August. Koloskie has been with the athletics department for the past 26 years, serving the last 10 years as senior associate athletic director in charge of all internal functions.

- The athletics department launched the **Rebel Kids Club** this summer. The club offers young fans free and reduced-price admission to sporting events, opportunities to meet student-athletes and coaches, tours of sports facilities, and other benefits. Visit unlvrebels.cstv.com for more info.



Fenway Fanatics

Baseball's oldest park becomes Michael Ian Borer's lab for urban culture

ON AN OCTOBER NIGHT IN 2004, it finally happened. Eighty-six years of ignominious futility were over. The Bambino was finally banished. The Curse was lifted. **The Boston Red Sox had won the World Series.**

For more than eight decades Bostonians were haunted by the Curse of the Bambino (the Red Sox sold Babe Ruth to the Yankees in 1919) as New York piled up title after title.

Then the miracle: The Red Sox, down 3-0 in their best-of-seven series, beat the hated Yankees four straight to win the American League pennant. They went on to the World Series, pasting the St. Louis Cardinals. That four-game series provided little drama for the most of the country; not so for Bostonians.

They flooded the streets around their Fenway Park; they had to be part of the crowd as the series came to a close. That the final game was taking place in St. Louis seemed not to matter. "Bostonians wanted to be together, outside the place that anchored their devotion to the team they've suffered with for so many years," says sociology professor Michael Ian Borer. "Fenway Park is the axis mundi of 'Red Sox Nation.'"

Borer was there too. A doctoral student at Boston University, he was working on his dissertation on urban culture and the relationship between people and places. Nearby Fenway Park, professional baseball's oldest ballpark, was his lab.

"As the game came to a close," he says, "I managed to climb over a 10-foot fence to get in the middle of the frenzied crowd, packed in like sardines to get as close to the ol' ballpark and to each other as possible. The sun never shined so brightly as it did the next day, the first day that Boston hadn't felt cursed in 86 years."

The sociologist recounts that night in the introduction to *Faithful to Fenway*, then turns to a scholarly examination of a place that one interviewee likened to watching a Shakespeare play in London's Globe Theatre. He cites an anthropologist who draws parallels between baseball and traditional religion. Like religion, baseball and Fenway

give Bostonians something larger than themselves to believe in, "something that transcends the here and now."

In addition to attending games, Borer spent hours with players, local fans, officials in the Red Sox organization, tavern owners, and out-of-town supporters. With his accessible writing style, Borer presents an academic text with lay audience appeal, and vice versa.

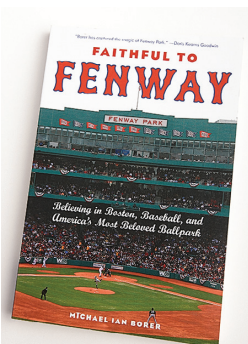
Borer argues that communities, "especially those in urban areas, need stories to help define who they are for themselves, for future generations, and for outsiders. Fenway Park helps Boston tell its story. Fenway Park is where people have been able to construct personal and collective narratives. But Fenway is not simply the setting for these stories. Often, Fenway Park is a character in their stories, and, depending on whom you talk to, has been a victim, a villain, and a hero."

After Boston, Borer found an oddly natural sequel in Las Vegas.

"The importance and use of places in Las Vegas is one of the issues that drew me here," he says. "And the juxtaposition is terrific. Boston, arguably the most historic American city where change is hard to find, and Las Vegas, a young and immature city where change regularly trumps stasis and stability."

He is now exploring the common Las Vegas pastime of people watching, which he calls an "everyday practice that affects the social order of urban life."

Using a sociologist's mix of detailed interviews and intensive observation, he has identified three forms of people watching: for pleasure; for profit, as marketing strategy; and for protection, a key element of surveillance. But, of course, there's one more: for knowledge, which may lead to Borer's next book.



Faithful to Fenway: Believing in Boston, Baseball and America's Most Beloved Ballpark

BY MICHAEL IAN BORER
New York University
Press, 2008

Women Making News: Gender and Journalism in Modern Britain

University of Illinois Press, 2006

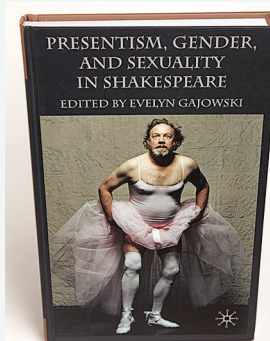
While American women sought the vote, publishing a variety of materials to press their cause, their sisters across the Atlantic were also lobbying for women's rights. Using newly discovered documents from the 19th century Society for Promoting the Employment of Women archives at Cambridge University, history professor **Michelle Tusan** examines the relationship between politics and British women and their publications from the mid-19th century through the 1930s.

A Meeting Planner's Guide to Catered Events

John Wiley & Sons, 2008

Hotel College professors

Patti Shock and John Stefanelli have created a guide to help event and convention planners negotiate contracts, deal with catering managers, and save money.



Presentism, Gender, and Sexuality in Shakespeare

Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

English professor **Evelyn**

Gajowski's new book is so in demand that it already is in its second printing. She assembled essays by an impressive collection of Shakespeare scholars who tackle issues such as gender roles, cross-dressing, homoerotic subtexts, terrorism, and war.

Mussel Beach

Multiplying mollusks spur fast-acting research team at Lake Mead

BY TONY ALLEN

At Lake Mead, you can see them everywhere. They're also everywhere you can't see.

Quagga mussels — menaces only as large as a dime when fully grown — are invading Lake Mead by the trillions. Lurking just below the water's surface, these little suckers are scary. They clog water pipelines, attach to boats and lake structures, and cripple the lake's ecosystem at a cost of millions each year.

Almost as quickly as the quaggas appeared, a team of UNLV researchers swooped in. Professors Shawn Gerstenberger and David Wong, as well as a dozen graduate students from the School of Community Health Sciences and UNLV's Public Lands Institute, have spent hours trolling for the multiplying mussels since their discovery in the lake's Boulder Basin just two years ago.

They are testing the quaggas' effect on water clarity and quality, assessing how deep in the lake they live, and determining if any fish in the lake are using the mussels as a food source. The research will help lake managers drastically reduce the quaggas' hold on our region's primary water supply.

"Before we can figure out how to better manage them, we first need to understand how many exist in the lake, what they're attracted to, and how they're affecting the lake's water quality and existing ecosystem," says Gerstenberger, chair of the environmental and occupational health department.

Researchers don't know exactly how the quaggas got here, though the most likely

culprit was an unsuspecting boater from the Great Lakes, where quagga and zebra mussels — their equally devastating relative — have been wreaking havoc for more than 20 years.

Quagga mussels' hold on Lake Mead is more troubling than the Great Lakes invasion, according to Wong, who came to UNLV in 2008 from the Wisconsin department of natural resources. Warmer water temperatures here allow for year-round reproduction and the lake's higher calcium concentration speeds shell growth. Wong is concerned about how the quaggas might affect levels of harmful cyanobacteria, a toxin that can compromise water quality and, at the very least, affect the taste and odor of Nevada's drinking supply.

"Some of the worst cases of physical destruction are happening now, with complete encrustation of mussels on much of the lake bottom, rock walls, and all unattended lake structures," says Wong, one of the nation's leading experts on freshwater invasive species. "Though the damage to the physical infrastructure is obvious, the period from 2010 on will reveal whether their effect on our water supply will be equally as damaging."

To keep the quaggas from invading other western lakes, UNLV has taken a leadership role in spreading the "don't move a mussel" gospel. Gerstenberger organizes the 100th Meridian Initiative in Nevada, an outreach effort with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service aimed at preventing boaters and the





lake-using public from unknowingly transporting invasive species out of Lake Mead.

Researchers say that strategically monitoring the behavior of the mussels is critical to water resource management. In January 2009, UNLV hosted the inaugural Lake Mead Science Symposium, a gathering of natural resources managers and research-

larvae in the consumption patterns of shad, small forage fish that serve as a primary food source for the sport-harvested fish in Lake Mead. With the food source of the shad — plankton — potentially threatened by the introduction of quagga mussels, scientists need to gauge changes in shad diets to get a clearer picture of the effects that quaggas will have

“Though the damage to the physical infrastructure is obvious, the period from 2010 on will reveal whether their effect on our water supply will be equally as damaging.”

ers from agencies across the nation.

Following the meeting, UNLV teamed with the National Park Service to develop the first standardized plan to track quagga mussel size, abundance, and distribution at more than 50 sites throughout the lake.

The monitoring sites will be located on the lake floor’s rocky, sandy, and muddy surfaces. Samples will be collected and analyzed every three months and logged into a standardized tracking database housed at UNLV.

The researchers will collect and analyze data, which water managers will be able to use to more consistently track mussel behavior in specific areas and to develop customizable and cost-effective remediation plans.

The UNLV team also tested recently for quagga

on the entire fish population.

So the obvious question, one that researchers and water managers struggle with, is how do we get rid of them?

Unfortunately, Wong says, “in a large natural ecosystem like Lake Mead, it’s impossible to fully eradicate quagga mussels.”

In smaller ecosystems or in aqueducts used for irrigation, natural predators such as black carp could be introduced, or chlorine and other chemicals could be added to the water. This isn’t a reality in Lake Mead, Wong says, because the lake’s existing species, not to mention our drinking water, would be drastically compromised.

“My hope is that the quagga mussel population reaches a threshold that finally limits their capacity in Lake Mead,” says Wong. “Be it space, food, disease, or chemical factors, there must be some factor that limits their growth — and we intend to find it.”

BRIEFLY

Business is not going up in smoke

Nevada’s ban on public smoking isn’t stubbing out business, according to a preliminary analysis by UNLV. The 2006 Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act prohibits smoking in many spaces. Its passage concerned business owners, who feared it would reduce sales and result in lost jobs.

UNLV tracked data from 1999 through the first quarter of 2009, taking into account seasonal and general economic trends. They found some immediate effects — such as a drop in restaurant openings — but the numbers soon rebounded. In most cases, the trends mirrored those in businesses not affected by the ban.

And, it seems, Nevada is not much different from other states; similar studies in Massachusetts and New York also showed little downward trends from smoke-free legislation.

Researchers are now examining restaurant and bar bankruptcies and expect to release a full report later this year. The team also is beginning a statewide economic impact study of the act.



BRIEFLY
.....**Radioactive
research
mushrooms
(in a good
way)**

With a young but thriving radiochemistry program, UNLV has landed a coveted position in global climate change research. The U.S. Department of Energy named UNLV one of its 31 lead institutions for tackling the issue through nuclear technology.

In just five years, the radiochemistry program has made a name for itself by developing ties to international laboratories, attracting sought-after graduate students, and putting out research studies. The DOE has awarded UNLV more than \$2.1 million to lead four new research projects.

Since the last nuclear power plant was commissioned in the U.S. more than 30 years ago, the annual number of new Ph.D.s in nuclear and radiochemistry has fallen to fewer than 10. The U.S. lags far behind other countries in terms of the human infrastructure needed to help lead a renaissance of the nation's nuclear power industry. But with 20 students now enrolled, UNLV's doctoral program will produce an additional six to 10 graduates in the next few years.



Yucca Mountain

Fallout

**VOLCANOLOGIST'S CAREER, UNLV PROGRAMS DEVELOP
AS NUCLEAR WASTE REPOSITORY BATTLE DRUG OUT**

"Students have benefitted from the work. It helps in experience, it helps them get published, it helps them get jobs — all the things a faculty member is supposed to do."



BY GREG LACOUR

For 23 years, geoscience professor Gene Smith has probed a ridge of volcanic rock 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas. Would this be a good place for the federal government to dispose of our nuclear waste?

He doesn't think so. The state of Nevada, and a lot of people in it, don't think so. And now, neither does the Obama Administration, which recently cut the U.S. Department of Energy's budget for getting approval of the **Yucca Mountain** nuclear repository to nearly zero.

Regardless of the final outcome, it's been time well spent for Smith. The **volcanologist** has learned quite a bit at Yucca Mountain: How and at what depth the magma was produced, how thick it was, how its chemistry varied, and what all those data can tell us about the vast mystery that lies under the Earth's crust.

"There's been a lot of basic science that's come out of this," Smith said. "**Students** have benefitted from the work. It helps in experience, it helps them get published, it helps them get jobs — all the things a faculty member is supposed to do." He chuckles.

The Detroit native has spent 29 years at UNLV, helping develop a geoscience graduate program from nothing, watching a staff of six professors swell to 24, and publishing more than **75 journal articles**.

In 2006, he won the \$10,000 Harry Reid Research Award, given annually to faculty whose research has responded to the needs of the community and state. The award comes from Annual Fund donations, gifts that are not restricted to specific uses. Smith used the money in his Yucca Mountain research, which he believes helps the state and its people by evaluating the **safety** of the site, or the lack of it.

In addition to the Yucca Mountain work, Smith is studying a series of volcanic areas, including the Lake Mead area, the Garlock Fault in California, and the St. George-Cedar City area of southwestern Utah. "They're building in areas where volcanoes erupted **2,000 years ago**," Smith says. "We're trying to determine what the risk is to the population in a very fast-growing part of Utah."

Another project he's worked on with implications for the world, never mind Nevada: "the study of Quaternary basaltic volcanism to the north of

the Yellowstone Caldera." **Wake up.** Yellowstone National Park, as scientists have realized in recent years, sits atop a 35-by-45-mile reservoir of magma, referred to as a caldera. It's what heats the park's magnificent geysers and thermal pools.

At assorted points throughout history, roughly every **600,000 years**, the caldera has erupted, although "exploded" might be a better term. If the entire caldera blew today, the results would be unimaginable: a **potential mass extinction** on the order of the Chicxulub meteor impact that is believed to have killed the dinosaurs. The caldera's last mass eruption, by the way, was about 640,000 years ago.

In short, what Smith's been doing, in collaboration with UNLV geology professor Terry Spell, is examining rock strata near Yellowstone for chemical signs that might **foretell** volcanic activity "in the near future" — which, to anyone studying rocks, can mean as much as 10,000 years. He's found some: increased levels of a certain isotope in the metal neodymium found in rock strata just below eruption layers. He's finding the isotope in younger lava rock, too.

Of course, this doesn't mean Yellowstone will blow next week, or even next century. Geoscientists tend to view the passage of time in terms of eons, not years. They talk about 2,000 years ago, he says, as if it was this morning.

Which is one reason why Smith accepts the seemingly **endless process** of attending the Yucca Mountain Repository with the calm of someone who knows, perhaps better than the rest of us, that the important things take time.

"It'd be nice if it was dead," he says, "but it's simply **not** going to happen that **easily**."

THIS JUST IN

TEEN SMOKING RISES

23%



Nevada high schoolers who used tobacco-based products (that's up 6% over last year)

4%



average rate of tobacco users among Clark County middle school students

7,024



Nevada teens screened for oral cancer by UNLV's School of Dental Medicine

283



tissue abnormalities found in the mouths of Nevada teens. 173 of them were found in the Reno area

—from data collected through the Crackdown on Cancer program, in which dental students and faculty travel in a mobile clinic throughout the state to provide comprehensive oral cancer screenings and education. Teens with tissue abnormalities are referred for further evaluation and early intervention treatment.

HIGH COST OF TRAFFIC

\$240,000



cost for a one-hour closure of Interstate 15 in one direction due to a traffic incident

20



percent of all accidents that are secondary incidents (caused by rubbernecking)

15,000



incidents cleared by local emergency management and transportation agencies each year on freeways

8,400,000,000



gallons of fuel wasted by highway traffic incidents

37,000



serious injuries occur annually from vehicle accidents in work zones

—from UNLV Transportation Research Center progress report for Nevada Department of Transportation. The center's research is helping NDOT reduce accident response and duration times and improve site management to avoid further delays and accidents. faculty.unlv.edu/trc/1MWeb/1MHome.html

READY TO LEAD

Neal Smatresk, UNLV president

Education: Ph.D., Zoology, University of Texas at Austin; M.A., Biology, State University of New York at Buffalo; B.A., Biology, Gettysburg College

Research specialty: Cardiorespiratory physiology in fish and amphibians, especially salamanders, toads, and gars. He has studied the evolution from breathing in water to breathing in air. He has also devoted considerable effort toward K-20 science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education.

Previous positions: From July 2007 to August 2009, Smatresk was UNLV's executive vice president and provost. Previously he was vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and dean of sciences at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Family: Married to Debbie Smatresk, an occupational therapist, for 31 years. The couple has two children: Erik, who works at a communications technology company in Texas; and Kristin, who works in marketing in Hawaii.

Neal Smatresk was appointed UNLV's ninth president in August after serving two years as UNLV's chief academic officer. Like half of UNLV's new undergraduates this fall, he is a first-generation college graduate. In accepting his appointment, Smatresk talked about what he loves most about UNLV: its power to change lives by connecting students with the opportunities that a degree will open up for them. In the six weeks following his appointment, Smatresk conducted more than 45 broadcast and dozens of print interviews, including this one with *UNLV Magazine*.

Family roots: When my Swedish grandfather came to Ellis Island, like so many immigrants, his name was changed. "Smatresk" is where he came from; it's a small homestead above the Arctic Circle. It means "small swamps or bogs."

My mother's relatives were colonial New Englanders. One relative was Benjamin Lincoln, a Revolutionary War general and the officer who accepted the British surrender at Yorktown. Lord Cornwallis wouldn't give

his sword directly to George Washington, so Washington sent his own second-in-command to accept it. A painting of the scene hangs in the U.S. Capitol.

Growing up: My dad owned a construction company in Buffalo, N.Y. The ground there freezes hard and pushes in the foundation walls of homes. So his company would jack up the house, knock down the broken walls, and rebuild them, then lower the house onto a new foundation. When I was 12, he put a shovel in my hand. That's what I did every summer through graduate school.

First generation: My family, like so many, expected me to go to college and make something of myself. They instilled in me that sense that you had to believe in yourself and be motivated, and then you'd find success.

On being a scientist: I was the kind of kid who blew stuff up in the basement and entered every science fair. In ninth grade a friend and I made a hovercraft out of a lawnmower engine. There was a lot about shear stress I didn't understand, so the impeller flew off and embedded

in the toe of my sneaker. It scared the heck out of me.

Exploring college: I went to a small liberal arts school. I majored in biology and was supposed to come back to Buffalo to take over my childhood dentist's practice. But, I got into the arts. I sang in the choir and acted in plays. I took up photography and was accepted at the Rhode Island School of Design. The urge to experiment kept drawing me back to science. Eventually I realized that research scientists were able to combine both their analytical and creative-thinking skills.

At home: I'm a do-it-yourself kind of guy. I did most of the landscape work at my house myself. I rented a backhoe to plant trees and move dirt. But I'm learning my limits. I injured my knee building a dry-stack rock wall.

Career advice: Work hard, do your job honorably, and good things will happen.

My job: I like to work with people to develop the high-level viewpoints and to build consensus for direction. Then the pieces have to be handed

off to the right team to execute.

Administration: I've been preparing for this position my entire career, but I can't say I set out 20 years ago to do just this. When you care a lot about your discipline, you're drawn to administrative service. I became a department chair. With that, you kind of have your tribe; you're in a position to fiercely defend the faculty. That led to more administrative duties, and eventually to this presidency.

The future: We are at a critical moment in the development of this university. Sometimes hard times trigger metamorphosis and the production of something amazing. I know that, in spite of the fiscal challenges we have faced, we are going to emerge stronger, leaner, and more efficient. We will be the new American university. Working together, we will ensure a great future for this university, a reputation we can all be proud of, and the continued success and prosperity of our region. *For more on Smatresk's vision for UNLV, read his message on Page 3 as well as "The Promise of Partnership" on Page 22.*



“ I can’t be my own detail person; I know that about myself. I have to know about a lot of different realms in the university, but I shouldn’t be micromanaging them.”

Dancing in the Dark

Premier UNLV, a welcome-back tradition for kicking off the fall semester, drew about 4,000 students to North Field for a barbecue, marching band and dance team performances, and concert. The 13-year-old event ends with a big bang when students light up the school's acronym with flashlights and sing the fight song during a choreographed pyrotechnic display. Attendance was up by more than 1,000 people over last year. [Photo by Aaron Mayes]







The Promise of Partnership

UNLV, THE LINCY INSTITUTE, AND BROOKINGS MOUNTAIN WEST TACKLE THE REGION'S SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

BY LISA ARTH

“We’re happy. We’re hopeful. Things are going to get better,” stated UNLV’s ninth president, Neal Smatresk, at the launch of the Brookings Mountain West initiative. “We are looking toward a sustainable, prosperous future for all of Nevada’s citizens.” Strong words for a visionary time in Nevada’s — and UNLV’s — history.

Just months after taking over as president, Smatresk presided over two announcements of major partnerships for UNLV — The Lincy Institute and Brookings Mountain West — within a space of two weeks. These partnerships represent two of the most significant milestones in UNLV’s history and will serve as guideposts for the next 50 years of its existence, tying the campus more closely to the needs of the region and putting UNLV at the forefront of collaborations with a national and global impact.

To borrow an analogy from Bill Antholis, managing director of the Brookings Institution, how these

“As I see Brookings and UNLV clasping hands, I see some of my family’s plans coming together in this partnership — this is a quantum leap forward for our region and our community.” Brian Greenspun, publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*

efforts came to pass within days of each other is like asking the parties in a successful marriage (including their friends and family) how they met. Everyone has a story and a perspective. It depends on who you talk to.

TO KNOW NEVADA IS TO LOVE NEVADA

Spend a few minutes with Bill Boldt, vice president for advancement at UNLV, and he’ll tell you about the courtship with The Lincy Foundation that led to a \$14 million gift and the creation of The Lincy Institute. “About a year ago, then-Provost Neal Smatresk and I began a conversation with Lindy Schumacher at The Lincy Foundation about a much smaller gift,” Boldt explains. But it was rapidly apparent that a greater partnership would be a better match. “We stopped thinking small.”

Schumacher, director of Nevada programs, and Jeff Wilkins, director for health and human services policy for The Lincy Foundation, worked with Smatresk and Boldt in developing a proposal to the foundation that zeroed in on the needs of Southern Nevada, yet had far-reaching implications. The newly created Lincy Institute will serve as a catalyst for the human capital needs of Nevada — in education, health care, and social services — by bringing together nonprofit and nongovernmental agencies to collaborate on larger grants and joint programs.

The Lincy Institute’s goals are threefold:

- Support the viability of the economic future of Nevada and the quality of life for its residents, especially in Southern Nevada.
- Create a new model for bringing together state, regional, and city agencies to address the large-scale challenges in Southern Nevada, with a particular focus on education, health care, and social services/public policy.
- Attract federal, state, and local funding.

Schumacher says that UNLV was on their radar way before that first conversation with Boldt and Smatresk.

“In working with Nevada nonprofits, we kept finding ideas and programs that worked. So we asked: Where did you get that idea? How do you know that? Why will this work? And, in response, our partners talked about the faculty, students, and research coming out of UNLV to support their ideas,” Schumacher explained. “Every single time, we came back to UNLV.”

Announced Aug. 26 and approved by the Board of Regents at its September meeting, the new Lincy Institute will be housed in UNLV’s Greenspun Hall and will employ program directors in health, education, and social systems and a full-time grant writer. Funding also will sponsor 12 faculty fellowships in related areas as well as scholarships and post-doctoral, graduate, and undergraduate assistantships to enhance existing educational and community programs.

“The Lincy Institute will be a hub for addressing the human capital challenges that are integral to the future prosperity of our region,” Smatresk explains.

One example of what The Lincy Institute will do for the community is in Denise Tanata-Ashby’s Nevada Institute for Children’s Research and Policy (NICRP), which focuses on many community-driven

projects — from infant mortality to teen pregnancy — that plague the region.

One of her pet projects is the Kindergarten Health Survey. A local pediatrician had lobbied for a bill in 2007 that would require Nevada children entering kindergarten to have health exams. It didn’t pass, but the institute was asked by the Southern Nevada Health District and the Clark County School District to see if such a bill was even necessary. NICRP is now collecting that data and has expanded the scope of the survey to provide more information on the overall health of children.

One trend Tanata-Ashby watches is a potentially alarming rise in overweight children, especially among African-Americans. That is certainly a concern for health care providers. But the bigger picture — one that UNLV is increasingly in tune with in this urban sustainability era — is that health issues are a red flag when it comes to learning, too.

The Kindergarten Health Survey will provide baseline data, but the institute doesn’t have the resources to look at contributing factors, such as lack of physical activity or poor dietary habits. So Tanata-Ashby would like to partner on a study that gets down to those layers.



“Our partners talked about the faculty, students, and research coming out of UNLV to support their ideas. Every single time, we came back to UNLV.” Lindy Schumacher, The Lincy Foundation (pictured with the foundation’s Jeff Wilkins)

“UNLV has to be a part of Las Vegas, and we want to add value to the community, not just by educating students but also by doing research that is relevant to this region.” Neal Smatresk, UNLV President



That's where Lincy comes in, bringing together various health and education agencies to tackle the interrelated pieces of the larger problem and turn the recommendations of Tanata-Ashby's institute into reality. "If we find that childhood obesity affects the ability to learn," she says, "what types of services and programs are available to address that? Do we have parks and outdoor recreation activities available? And how can we make walking to school safer?"

THE HUB OF THE INTERMOUNTAIN WEST

According to Antholis, the story of how the couple met started five years ago when the Brookings Institution — one of the oldest and most prominent research organizations in the nation — began a study looking at the fastest-growing parts of the country, focusing on the four-state Western region and the Carolinas.

From this study, came the 2008 report titled, "Mountain Megas: America's Newest Metropolitan Places and a Federal Partnership to Help Them Prosper." In this report, the Brookings Institution described the explosive growth of the Mountain Megas and the critical needs of this region in infrastructure, human capital, and enhanced research and development to build diversified and sustainable economies.

Nevada is one of five states that make up the Southern Intermountain West, or Mountain Megas, with the other four

states being Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. These states have the fastest population growth and economic and demographic transitions anywhere in the country. And, while other regions have received tremendous investment of federal funding, this region has yet to realize its full developmental potential.

In talking about the assumptions for the Mountain Megas report, co-author Robert Lang stated: "True prosperity is actually based on achieving those three interrelated dimensions of prosperity — sustainable, productive, and inclusive growth — all at once. In addition, we assumed that such balanced growth depends on the region assembling in its megapolitan areas sufficient stocks of the crucial assets that contribute to such prosperity: top-notch infrastructure, world-class innovation inputs, vital human capital, and strong quality-of-place, as well as the effective regional governance to put it all together."

Enter UNLV. In 2008, the campus began a significant strategic planning exercise known as "Focus: 50 to 100" led by then-Provost and Executive Vice President Smatresk. After months of looking inward and positioning the university to move into its second 50 years of existence, a mission and vision for the future of UNLV emerged and brought focus to UNLV's efforts. The plan articulated that the university's success was integrally tied to its role in the economic and social development of Southern Nevada.

And, in a strange twist of fate, the vision for the future of UNLV coincided almost exactly with the findings of the Mountain Megas report from the Brookings Institution. In fact, the new report not only meshed with the vision, but it also added immediate substance and clarity.

While learning from today's problems (as outlined in the Megas report), the ultimate goal is to prepare the region for tomorrow. To accomplish this, all three sustainability categories — human capital, economic diversification, and meeting the hard infrastructure challenges of our region — have to be addressed. "We do all three of those at UNLV," Smatresk says, "but we hadn't said it that crisply. So we said let's sharpen our focus and build around those critical areas."

The Brookings Mountain West initiative at UNLV will do this in two ways. First, UNLV will serve as the hub for research and as a facilitator for solutions for the Mountain Megas, focused on finding solutions to the critical challenges facing these fast-growing communities — challenges such as sustainable water and energy resources, producing the necessary human capital, and fueling the technological advances that will help these areas prosper economically.

Second, eight Brookings' senior scholars will spend one to three weeks at UNLV this year, sharing their expertise on issues ranging from alternative energy to demographics and getting a better feel for the issues.

Lang will join the UNLV sociology faculty in January and will serve as both the research director for the Brookings Mountain West initiative and the interim executive director for The Lincy Institute. When asked why Las Vegas, he says, "Las Vegas is a nice place from which to access the entire West. When you do things in California, sometimes it's just all about California — it's so large. But, if you locate in a place like Las Vegas, you have a lot of California in there, plus you get the rest of the West."

Brookings gets a proving ground that looks to be the perfect fit for its 21st-century mission. "It's the experiment to see if going from local to global can work," Antholis says. "We know we can [develop policies] sitting at home in Washington, but can we do it on the ground in a particular place where we connect those local learnings to broader global developments?"

And, finally, Brookings gets a university that has those aforementioned ambitions as well as an unusual combination of strength and flexibility.

"It's a big research university that's been growing, that is entrepreneurial, and that is open to this kind partnership with Brookings," Lang says. "It's flexible enough to leverage its assets by partnering with a big think tank — that openness is critical. Las Vegas is not an old city, and it doesn't have an old way of doing things. And the university nicely reflects the city itself."

"We had actually been looking at this place and at this university for a lot longer than the university and the place may have realized," says Antholis.

A 20-YEAR PLAN

Brian Greenspun explains that the courtship has actually been going on for close to 20 years, starting when his family decided to create the Hank Greenspun School of Journalism and Media Studies at UNLV in honor of his father.

In keeping with the family's mission to work toward improving the quality of urban life in Southern Nevada, the Greenspun family then presented UNLV with a second gift to establish the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs. Together with the state, the family made possible the five-story Greenspun Hall, which houses the college.

Greenspun Hall is now the home of The Lincy Institute and Brookings Mountain West. Coincidence?

In addition to being major benefactors to UNLV, the Greenspun family publishes the influential *Las Vegas Sun*. Brian Greenspun is editor of the *Sun* and a prominent member of the Brookings board of trustees.

Enter Smatresk. He saw the stars aligning. With Greenspun's help, Smatresk orchestrated a meeting between Brookings and Schumacher and Wilkins of The Lincy Foundation in Washington, D.C., and the pieces fell into place.

As the Lincy partnership came together, along with the prioritization of UNLV's sustainability mission and how these tandem efforts could help address the Mountain Mega report, Smatresk knew that Brookings, with its policy-making prowess back East and its heightened concern for the West, was a perfect fit.

At a November 2007 trustees meeting that just happened to be in Las Vegas, Smatresk and Greenspun talked with Antholis and Brookings President Strobe Talbott about the possibilities of partnering with UNLV.

As part of living up to a mission to be on the cutting edge of research and apolitical policy making, the Brookings' trustees at that Las Vegas meeting already had their sights on westward expansion. They wanted to take action on what would soon become the Mountain Mega report, which expresses the "supersized reality" of the five emerging metro areas in Arizona, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, and Nevada and which seeks a solution for the stressful boom-and-bust cycles that have defined the region.

"My father always told me that the way to stay young and vital is to have a 20-year plan," Greenspun explains. "Now as I see Brookings and UNLV clasping hands, I see some of my family's plans coming together in this partnership — this is a quantum leap forward for our region and our community."

It all made sense. "UNLV has to be a part of Las Vegas, and we want to add value to the community, not just by educating students but also by doing research that is relevant to this region," states Smatresk. "Through the support of the Greenspun family, The Lincy Foundation, and countless others, UNLV is shaping the future, not just for our region but for Nevada and beyond."

AND YET ANOTHER PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

For more than three decades, Ron Smith has been working at UNLV and talking about sustainability. Now vice president for research and graduate studies, Smith says he can see that UNLV is finally at a place where it can position itself to be a leader in the field.

"The stars have aligned and converged," says Smith. "UNLV is the right place, and this is the right time to have a serious voice in the sustainability discussion."

In 1972, when Smith was a brand-new UNLV faculty member, the population of Clark County was 307,000. Today, there are 2 million people. So, during his tenure, the professor has witnessed one of the greatest population explosions in American history.

Along the way, UNLV has taken advantage of the research opportunities inherent in a unique community. It developed community-focused staples such as Smith's Urban Sustainability Initiative, the Transportation Research Center, the Center for Energy Research, the Public Lands Institute, and the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies.

The Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies links researchers from multiple disciplines and helps them tackle big-picture problems in renewable energy, nuclear energy, and cultural and environmental sciences. The approach has helped the



"True prosperity is actually based on achieving those three interrelated dimensions of prosperity — sustainable, productive, and inclusive growth — all at once." Robert Lang, Brookings Institution

center attract multimillion-dollar grants, and nearly all its funding comes from competitive federal grants. This type of progress recently prompted the U.S. Department of Energy to name UNLV one of 31 lead nuclear energy research universities; the center's transmutation research program has received more than \$28 million since 2001 alone.

If The Lincy Institute covers the social and cultural aspects of sustainability (human capital) and Brookings is, to a large extent, about economic sustainability, the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies explores sustainability of the physical environment — the hard infrastructure requirements. To sum it up, these three components represent the three focus areas identified in both the Mountain Mega report and in UNLV's strategic plan.

The beauty of this new relationship is the interdependence of all three types. "It's all hooked together," Smith says. "I mean, if you have more people employed, you have less need for welfare. And over at the Harry Reid Center, they're doing a lot of renewable energy stuff, and that's about creating jobs in new areas of solar and biofuels."

That explains why Tom Piechota is not only director of sustainability, but of *multidisciplinary* research. That's a key word within UNLV's sustainability business. His department, the Urban Sustainability Initiative (USI), "looks at 21st-century challenges in the urban arena," and that means making sure that all relevant departments are in on the discussion.

Two examples of different sizes: USI supports the College of Hotel Administration in helping small local restaurants reduce their energy and water footprints, and it is bringing together the departments needed for UNLV to become the solar research hub of the Southwest. The scale of future projects may depend on what Brookings and Lincy bring to the table.

Piechota's "perfect example" of this potential energy is the sociology department's Las Vegas Metropolitan Area Social Survey of how "residents think about their urban environment across the three dimensions of sustainability." This overlaps with Lincy's interests in terms of quality-of-life issues and with Brookings' in terms of planning. "Then USI can relate that back to the built environment and what it needs to be sustainable," he says.

Hopefully, after data is gathered and conclusions are reached, the city of Las Vegas planning department, a partner in the project, can do something with it. But there's also a chance that Lincy and Brookings can facilitate the "real-life implementation of research, whether connecting it to policy or the community," Piechota says.

With Brookings especially, there will be opportunities for UNLV to spread its wealth of sustainability research to even higher levels. As Piechota says: "We're doing research on Nevada, but they're everybody's issues. We're one of the Mountain Mega communities, and this creates an opportunity for us to be a major player in these discussions."

"What this partnership has the potential to

do is to plug UNLV more directly into broader national and international discussions," Antholis says. "I think what we add is a constant feeding to that process, as well as a system for taking it from the local to the national to the global level."

A PROSPEROUS AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

"I believe that the partnership between The Lincy Institute, the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies, and the Brookings Mountain West initiative will create possibilities for this city and our region that we could have only and would have only dreamt about in the past," Smatresk explains. "It's an opportunity. It's a gift. And I think it is a challenge to learn how to be impactful, to take our work and transform it into regional change that wasn't possible a year ago."

In the short term, the announcements of the Lincy and Brookings partnerships have been a silver lining, and Smatresk was happy to deliver some good news after a season of budget cuts and hiring freezes.

"Partnerships of this magnitude allow strategic hires despite the bad budget," he says. "While everybody else is dead in the water, we're going to go out and hire some superstars. This is one of the most exciting opportunities this university has ever had to put itself on the map. This will launch us into national prominence," he says. "I believe that what we're putting into place [with Lincy and Brookings] will help shape Nevada over the next 50 years." ■

The Lincy Institute at UNLV

lincyinstitute.unlv.edu

The big goal: Work with local nonprofits to address needs of the region in social services, education, and health care.

How: The institute will be a resource hub for area nonprofits, bringing expertise in research and data analysis and fostering collaboration with other agencies and nonprofits on overlapping issues. Nevada ranks last in federal grants per capita, partly because nonprofits lack such crucial resources as grant writers.

Staffing: The institute will eventually fund as many as 10 positions at UNLV, including an executive director, outreach and program directors, grant writer, and statistician. In addition to a dozen faculty fellowships, the institute will fund graduate assistantships and undergraduate scholarships when it is fully operational.

Back story: The Lincy Foundation donated \$14 million to launch the institute. It was founded in 1989 by Kirk Kerkorian, president and CEO of Tracinda Corp. In 2008, the foundation donated \$5 million to support health sciences programs in the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Brookings Mountain West Initiative

brookingsmtnwest.unlv.edu

The big goal: Help the five major cities in the Intermountain West — Las Vegas, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Denver, and Salt Lake City — end their boom-bust cycles and achieve sustainable, economically productive growth.

How: BMW will conduct public-policy research and build an agenda for federal reforms in key infrastructure areas of transportation, water, education, immigration, health care, and energy.

Staffing: A full-time research director will be housed at UNLV. Brookings scholars will visit UNLV for one- to three-week residencies this academic year. Their interactions with faculty and students will include public seminars, lectures, and research activities. Visit the website for the full schedule.

Back story: The Brookings Institution traces its beginnings to 1916 and the founding of the first private organization for public policy analysis. Its achievements include contributing to the formation of the United Nations, creation of the Congressional Budget Office, deregulation, broad-based tax reform, welfare reform, and the design of foreign aid programs.



Favorite project: The Kindergarten Health Survey, which is tracking demographic data, insurance status, certain behaviors, and other health indicators of children. The 2008-09 survey found that about a third of Nevada kindergartners had not received dental care in the past 12 months, 36 percent were overweight or at

Other programs: Tanata-Ashby directs 10 major projects involving dozens of community agencies through the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy at UNLV. Projects with such groups as the health district; the Southern Nevada Immunization Coalition; and the Women, Infants, and Children program have increased immunization rates in young children.

Denise Tanata-Ashby

Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy

risk of being overweight, and 16 percent of their parents couldn't follow doctor's orders for their children because of costs.

The payoff: This data has never been collected before. Because health is linked to academic performance, the data will help Nevada school districts partner with other agencies to target services, such as dental screenings, to areas where they are most needed. "Although we are starting only our second year of data collection, the results have already been used to argue for additional services and funding for community-based health and education programs."

Other community-partnership projects have collected and analyzed data on child deaths, teen pregnancy, school dropouts, lead poisoning, and early-education resources.

If she could wave a magic wand: "We don't have to continue to be at the bottom of every list ranking social indicators for kids. With true community engagement and collaboration on issues in health care, child welfare, early childhood education, and juvenile justice, we can do so much better for the children in our state."

[Human Infrastructure: **Social Services**]



Favorite project: “That’s a bit like choosing a favorite child,” she says. But she pointed to a research project with the Clark County department of family services as an example of the role UNLV plays in the community. Funded by a five-year federal grant, the Caring Communities Demonstration Project brought together several agencies to improve care for abused and neglected children.

Ramona Denby Brinson

Social Work Professor

The payoff: More children placed with relative caregivers rather than regular foster care. Program changes led to a reduction in re-abuse rates. The number of adoptions by relative caregivers doubled in four years, to 32 percent in 2008. Brinson’s team also found a decrease in behavior and medical difficulties among the children in relative care. Brinson attributes the success to the targeted services for the kinship care providers, program changes, and agency reorganizations that the initiative helped usher in.

Other programs: Overseeing a federal grant to evaluate and make recommendations for overhauling the state children’s mental health systems; assessing the workforce needs for mental health care providers across the state; and assisting in the assessment of programs to decrease recidivism in children who commit crimes. On that last one, she says: “Often untreated mental health problems and addictions are at the

root of the issue. We took a seed grant from UNLV to bring together community partners and UNLV experts in six different disciplines to

test an intervention that pairs mental health and juvenile justice professionals.”

If she could wave her magic wand: “With a large population growth, Clark County’s infrastructure is depleted or was never in place to begin with. My wand would pull the best resources and talent out there together to build an effective infrastructure across all Nevada child- and family-serving systems.”

“We took a seed grant from UNLV to bring together community partners and UNLV experts in six different disciplines to test an intervention that pairs mental health and juvenile justice professionals.”

[Human Infrastructure: **Education**]



“Everybody believes education is important; the problem is that not a lot are willing to put their money where their dreams are.”

Favorite project: Nevada Partnership for Inclusive Education (PIE), a collaboration of the university system, the local school district, and private donors. PIE training, resources, and recognition programs help local teachers improve their skills in working with children with disabilities in inclusive environments. PIE has funded some of its programs through \$1 million in private donations. Pierce is a founding PIE board member.

Tom Pierce

Special Education Professor

The payoff: Participating schools have all shown progress in the disability category of the No Child Left Behind Act. Down the road, progress here means there will be much less reliance on social services. “But, also, inclusive education involves people with

disabilities in the life of the community from the start; it shows how they can contribute to the community as well.”

Other programs: Pierce is board chair for the Acelero Head Start program, which serves 1,700 at-risk preschool children; runs a grant program that helps working families afford day care; co-directs an \$800,000 federal grant with Kyle Higgins of special education to boost the number of teachers trained for autism and mental retardation.

If he could wave a magic wand: “Right now, maybe because of where we are as a state, I would make people recognize the value of education and support it to that level. Everybody believes education is important; the problem is that not a lot are willing to put their money where their dreams are.”

[Hard Infrastructure: **Water**]



Overview: USI's goal is to use UNLV's resources to help Las Vegas become an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable community. It has provided seed money for a variety of cross-disciplinary research projects, including studies to reduce water use in restaurants, prevent depression in health care providers, and

Tom Piechota

Urban Sustainability Initiative

shed light on the economic and environmental impact of new modes of transportation. USI is also part of a team dedicated to making the campus a model of sustainability by promoting green buildings, car-pooling, turf-reduction efforts, and recycling programs.

His specialty: A hydrologist, Piechota is creating computer simulations to help water managers better understand climate change in the Colorado River Basin. "They want to learn more about the range of possibilities in future water supplies," he says. "If, for example, the river rises with a 100-year flood or drops 20 feet more during a drought, they want to know what might happen to new and existing infrastructure. For instance, will a dam still protect the public?"

If he could wave his magic wand: "I would make everyone understand that there are steps we all can take to address climate change challenges. As big as these challenges are, our personal choices still have an impact."

"As big as these challenges are, our personal choices still have an impact."

[Hard Infrastructure: **Energy**]



Overview: It brings together faculty from different departments to address renewable energy, radiochemistry, and nuclear technologies, as well as cultural/environmental sciences. Its transmutation research program is searching for economical ways to refine spent nuclear fuel. The microbiology unit is addressing air

Oliver Hemmers

Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies

quality in Southern Nevada and is about to become part of the federal Biowatch Program. UNLV's radiochemistry program recently made headlines in the September issue of *Nuclear News*, a leading industry publication, as one of the most notable in the nation.

His specialty: A physicist and materials scientist, Hemmers wants to make your fuel green, literally. Algae makes a better feedstock for biofuels than corn, sugar cane, and soy beans, he says, because it grows rapidly and year-round without competing with the food chain. The challenge is in extracting the algae from water and then processing it into energy in a cost-efficient way. He also is working on new materials for hydrogen fuel technology. "It comes down to finding the way to extract, store, and distribute energy for the new (nonfossil fuel) economy," he says.

If he could wave his magic wand: "Every human needs energy for light, for heat, to make clean water — to basically make their environments livable and productive. Distributing energy to everyone is a global infrastructure problem that we are very far away from solving. So, being a technocrat, I would want to create a small, inexpensive energy unit that could be deployed anywhere."

"Distributing energy to everyone is a global infrastructure problem that we are very far away from solving."



LIGHTENING

IT'S MARKETING 101 for any filmmaker, particularly those whose movies lack an A-list celebrity to hype: Hook potential moviegoers with a memorable title. In this respect, UNLV film graduates Jerry and Mike Thompson took the customary approach with their feature-film debut, *Thor at the Bus Stop*. But that's where convention ends.

“THERE’S A MOVIE STRUCTURE that people are used to, and this doesn’t have any of that,” Mike Thompson says of *Thor*. “So if you’re sick of that structure where two friends meet up and then get into a crazy adventure and then they get into a big fight and then they get back together at the end — there’s none of that in this movie at all.”

FROM CONCEPT TO STORYLINE to budget to the filmmaking process, *Thor at the Bus Stop* breaks free from the Hollywood moviemaking formula. And with the exception of the budget — What filmmaker wouldn’t take more money if offered? — the nontraditional approach was very much intentional.

JERRY THOMPSON was about 10 years old when he first gripped a video camera. It belonged to his cousins, and Jerry would lead the youngsters in the family in making “movies” whenever they got together. “We’d shoot them all the way through,” recalls Jerry, who is 34 and the second in a line of five brothers. “If we screwed up, we just kept going. And we’re talking about movies we’d finish in two or three hours. Then we’d watch them and just laugh.”

In high school, when other kids his age were saving money for a car, Jerry was scraping together cash to buy his own camera. As a 17-year-old runner for a local advertising agency, he stumbled upon a new contraption to replace the two VCRs he’d rigged together to edit footage. “They had a linear editing system down in their basement,” he recalls. “Nobody knew how to use it, but I read the manual and I made a movie [using] that.”

At this point, Jerry’s brother Mike — the fourth of the five brothers and seven years Jerry’s junior — had caught the art bug. He was taking theater classes in junior high and “starring” in the Thompson family’s

for biochemistry and a future as a doctor. He spent his first seven semesters studying anatomy, but kept his artistic juices flowing by drawing the anatomy. In the mid 1990s while still a student, he was hired to do caricatures at several hotels on the Strip, including Excalibur, New York-New York, and the Venetian. He estimates he drew about 35,000 caricatures over a seven-year span. He taught that skill to Mike, who started doing caricatures right out of high school.

As the paychecks added up, Jerry realized “it wasn’t being lazy or copping out” to pursue an art profession. With his core coursework complete, he spent the next two years taking nothing but film courses. He finished his degree about the time little brother Mike arrived on campus. There would be no second-guessing a major for Mike — he followed his brother’s footsteps once more.

BY THE TIME they graduated — Jerry in 2001, Mike in 2005 — the Thompsons had co-created numerous short films. They won multiple awards from UNLV’s Spring Flicks and their films were accepted into other

UNLV professor. David Schmoeller, who was also honored for several works at the festival, approached his former students and told them he wanted to produce their first full-length feature movie.

“For the most part, I thought that everything they had done to that point was very unique,” says Schmoeller, who had previously spent nearly three decades as a writer and filmmaker in Hollywood before joining the faculty in 2001. “I went more on blind faith and I just said, ‘Let’s make a feature, whatever you come up with.’”

The brothers kicked around several ideas, but Mike kept coming back to *Thor at the Bus Stop*, the first short film he wrote as a student. It revolved around the mythical Norse God of Lightning, who tries to save the world before his demise in a modern-day Las Vegas suburb.

“I always wanted to make *Thor* into a feature,” says Mike, who cops to a longtime affinity for Norse mythology, “and I told Jerry that a couple of times, but he didn’t seem totally interested.”

Jerry has a different take: “I was open to the idea, but each character has to have an arc and they have to have closure and things have to actually happen so it doesn’t just feel like a random series of events. The story had to weave together in a way that’s interesting and seamless and funny.”

Ultimately, the brothers combined

STRIKES

WHEN THE THOMPSON BROTHERS TEAM UP WITH DOZENS OF ALUMS TO BRING A NORSE GOD TO THEATERS

BY MATT JACOB

homemade films. The first time Mike saw Jerry editing a movie, “I quickly realized [filmmaking] was something I *had* to do.” But just as his younger brother’s enthusiasm for a career in the arts was peaking, Jerry began to have doubts.

The Thompson brothers grew up in North Las Vegas in “not such a great neighborhood,” Jerry says. “It always seemed like life was supposed to be hard if you were going to be successful. So I didn’t think it was feasible to be an artist.”

When he enrolled at UNLV, Jerry — whose oldest brother already was an engineering major at the university — passed over film

festivals, including CineVegas, the weeklong film festival staged every June at The Palms.

Two of the more accomplished “shorts” were Mike-inspired ideas, titled *Thor at the Bus Stop* and *Passenger Seat*. *Thor* won the Best Film award at the 2003 Spring Flicks competition and the Audience Choice Award at the Las Vegas Mercury Film Festival the same year. Four years later, *Passenger Seat* won eight awards, including five from the 2007 Spring Flicks.

At the 2007 Best Dam Short Film Festival in Boulder City, the Thompson brothers took the Best Nevada Filmmaker award and attracted renewed attention from a former

the original *Thor* with elements from another award-winning short, *Passenger Seat*. They presented the idea to their professor-turned-producer, who gave it two enthusiastic thumbs up. “*Thor* was the most original and promising short [film] the brothers had made,” Schmoeller says. “It was really this giant fish-out-of-water story that had a lot of funny bits going on within it.”

Schmoeller compares the feature film to Richard Linklater’s 1991 cult classic *Slacker* “because there are a number of characters that keep weaving in and out and running into each other and multiple stories. But in terms of mixing a mythological character in

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1970s

Dana Xavier Kerola, '73 BS Physics, is an atmospheric scientist at NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He is involved in polarized atmospheric radioactive transfer modeling and spacecraft sensor vicarious calibrations. He earned a master's degree in astronomy from UCLA, a Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences from the University of Arizona, and is completing postdoctoral research at the University of California, Irvine. He previously worked for the University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory and its Terrestrial Biophysics Remote Sensing Group and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems. He lives in Diamond Bar, Calif.



Wayne Nunnely, '75 BS Physical Education, is defensive line coach for the Denver Broncos. He has coached 18 years at the college level and 15 years in the National Football League. He began as a graduate assistant for UNLV in 1976 and returned to coach from 1982 to 1989, serving as head coach from 1986 to 1989. He also coached at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; CSU, Fullerton; University of the Pacific; USC; and UCLA. In the NFL, he coached for the New Orleans Saints and the San Diego Chargers. At UNLV he was the first African-American head coach on the West Coast and only the fifth in NCAA Division I-A history. He also was the first UNLV graduate to become a graduate assistant coach, assistant coach, and head coach at UNLV. The father of four lives with his wife in Greenwood Village, Colo.

Maureen Abell Bernstein, '76 BA Theatre, '98 Master of Education, is theatre director at Desert Oasis High School. In its first year, the program was designated an Honor Thespian Troupe and awarded superior and excellent ratings. Since joining the Clark County School District in 1994, she has taught theater at Valley and Desert Pines high schools. She is a board member of the Nevada State Thespians and professional director with the Educational Theatre Association. Hobbies include collecting antiques, seeing Broadway shows, writing theater pieces, reading, and keeping up with current events. She and her husband, John, have one grown son, Frankie. She lives in Henderson.

Louis H. Geigerman, '76 BS Hotel Administration, is a special education advocate who helps families acquire appropriate programming from public schools for their children. His company, National ARD/IEP



with a contemporary setting, I don't know necessarily that that's been done."

Mike, who plays White Trash Chuck in the movie, describes it as a chain reaction with multiple main characters. "Everyone kind of thinks they're the main character but nobody really is. That's kind of the heart of the film — that everyone is equally important and it's all kind of connected."

JERRY AND MIKE dove into the script in February 2008 and by June the cameras were rolling. The 6-foot-7, blond-haired Jerry took on the part of Thor per his brother's request. They completed *Thor* in 20 shooting days (all on weekends over a three-month span, and all in Las Vegas) with help from a cast and crew of 60. It was a UNLV project from start to finish with nearly every role on and off camera filled by a current student or alumnus.

With a shoestring budget, nobody received any monetary compensation. That included May Luong, '06 BA Film Studies, who had a bit part in the movie and served as co-producer with Schmoeller. Luong also co-produced the Schmoeller-directed short films *Wedding Day* and *Two Frenchman Lost in Las Vegas*.

On *Thor*, Luong "pretty much handled all the logistics of getting everyone where they needed to be and had what they needed," Jerry says. "She organized the whole shooting schedule, which was

Alumna May Luong's duties included organizing filming around the day jobs of a cast and crew of 60 volunteers.

a nightmare with all the people involved. Since everyone was working for free, we had to work around everyone's availability. With dozens of speaking parts, organizing them all was a fairly miraculous accomplishment. Mike and I didn't have to do anything but direct and shoot."

By October 2008, the brothers had completed a rough cut and sent it off for sound production, which took several months. In the meantime, Jerry submitted *Thor* for consideration for the 2009 CineVegas festival; the brothers had shown at CineVegas previously, but never with a feature-length film.

"Short films are awesome, I love them and I want to keep making them for the rest of my life," Jerry says. "But at film festivals like CineVegas, you kind of feel like a freshman who snuck into the prom. You have a badge and you get to go, but you [only] made a short, and all the feature directors are kind of looking at you like 'Oh, that's cute. I used to do that.'"

Thor was accepted as the only Nevada entry in the feature category, and it was shown on consecutive nights in June in a packed 400-seat theater. Local media coverage was all positive and more screenings followed, including the 2009 World Comedy Film Festival in Bangkok and the 2009 Singapore International Film Festival. Then in



late August, The Palms' Brenden Theaters jumped on board once again, agreeing to give *Thor* a full-fledged theatrical release with a month-long stint that began in late September.

"If we have a good run [at The Palms], then it bodes well for the film," Schmoeller says. "I think it will get attention and we may continue to release it theatrically in a very small way — going from one theater to another theater to another theater. Or we may just decide to try to sell it to a cable [network]."

AS FOR WHAT'S on deck for the brothers Thompson as a creative team, a little bit of everything. Jerry has owned his own production company (Light Forge Studios) for several years and has multiple film and editing projects in the works. He often employs both Mike and his youngest brother, Gary Scott Thompson, who is finishing up his film degree at UNLV.

Mike and Jerry also have written two short films that they're hoping to produce, and they've signed

Luong, film professor David Schmoeller, and brothers Mike and Jerry Thompson

on to co-write and co-direct an oddball feature film for Gregory Popovich, who stars six days a week in the family-oriented Popovich Comedy Pet Theater show at Planet Hollywood.

Beyond that, the brothers say there are no big-picture plans. The hope, of course, is that *Thor* is successful and catapults their career to the next level, eventually leading to another feature film. Regardless, they will continue to write, act, direct, film, and edit, and do so mostly together and mostly in their hometown.

"I think it's likely as time elapses — and really, it's already started to happen — we're going to have different interests," Jerry says. "There are going to be times when one of us is really excited about a project and the other isn't so much. But neither one of us has ever written and directed a movie without the other one. And I don't think we ever will."

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Advocates, was founded in 1995. He is politically active in advocacy issues for the disabled. Hobbies include fishing, canoeing, and traveling. The father of a son in college and a daughter in high school, he lives in Sugar Land, Texas.

Benny Yen Ho Ng, '77 BS Hotel Administration, is group general manager of Santa Grand Hotels in Singapore. The group currently operates five hotels and plans to open two more soon.

Richard J. Darder, '78 BS Hotel Administration, '91 MS Hotel Administration, is senior vice president and general manager with Ameristar Casino Hotel Council Bluffs in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He has worked at gaming facilities for more than 30 years and has managed Native American properties in the Midwest and West. Most recently he was general manager of the Meskwaki Casino Bingo Hotel in Iowa. His first casino job was in 1975 when he worked as a pit clerk at the MGM Grand while completing his bachelor's degree.

Sue Harkins Weakland, '79 BS Education, retired after 23 years in the parks and recreation field. She says her UNLV connections and education proved valuable in her career. Her hobbies include watching the Runnin' Rebels, shopping yard sales, and entertaining friends. She is the mother of two grown sons, Chris and Kevin, and the grandmother of Kaitlin.

1980s

Sal Semola, '81 BS Hotel Administration, is an associate with Warner Gaming, an industry consulting firm. He was honored as the Hotel Management Industry Executive of the Year at the 2009 Vallen Dinner of Distinction.

Charisse Ciambrone-Stewart, '82 BA Sociology, teaches adult English as a Second Language at the College of Southern Nevada. Previously, she taught English and math to credit-deficient students through Morris Behavior Junior/Senior High School and taught at Fremont Middle School where she once was a student. She has two daughters, Shea Victoria and Quin.

Francis Beckwith, '83 BA Philosophy, is a full professor of philosophy and church-state studies at Baylor University. His books include *Defending Life: A Moral and Legal Case Against Abortion Choice* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) and *Return to Rome: Confessions of An Evangelical Catholic* (Brazos, 2009). The latter is an account of his spiritual journey from Catholicism to Evangelical Protestantism and back. He previously taught at UNLV. In 2008-09 he served as the Mary Ann

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Remick Senior Visiting Fellow in the Center for Ethics & Culture at the University of Notre Dame. He lives in Woodway, Texas.

Richard Hunsaker, '83 BS Computer Science, is executive vice president of applied technology for Creative Applications Inc., a high-tech consultancy. A veteran of the gaming industry, he recently worked as technical coordinator for Shuffle Master Inc. He is an expert in leading development teams as well as gaming product features and functions. He earned an Executive MBA from the University of Phoenix. His hobbies are maintaining the role of husband and father with style and grace and stretching the boundaries of PCs and home electronics. He and his wife, Nancy, have two daughters, Nicole and Natalie.

James "Tom" Bowman, '84 BS Business Administration, retired in February for the second time. In 1981 he retired from the U.S. Air Force and then used the G.I. Bill to earn his UNLV degree. This time, he retired as a branch manager after 25 years with Sherwin Williams Co. Hobbies include ballroom dancing, watching movies, and trying to find the Runnin' Rebels on television. He and his wife, Sylvia, a former show dancer, live in Aurora, Colo.

Rho Hudson, '84 Master of Education, '99 Ed.D. Special Education, is an education professor and director of the Resource Center for Students with Disabilities at Nevada State College. She was one of the seven founding faculty members of the college when it opened in 2002. Previously, she served as testing coordinator for the Clark County School District and taught special education kindergarten. Her hobby is caring for her "menagerie" of rescued pets, including four llamas, one burro, seven dogs, and numerous cats, goats, tortoises, and birds.

Kai H. Fischer, '85 BS Hotel Administration, took over the Dallas Marriott Plano at Legacy Town Center as general manager after completing the expansion of the Dallas Marriott Solana. He is the business council chairman for Marriott, leading efforts for the 70-plus Marriott products in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. He resides in Southlake with his wife, Colleen, and three children.

Craig J. Frigaard, '85 BS Hotel Administration, '08 Master of Hospitality Administration, has held numerous food and beverage management positions, including eight years as food and beverage director of the Stardust Resort Hotel & Casino, two and a half years as executive director of food and beverage at the Atlantis Casino in Reno, and one year as corporate director of food and beverage for the three Primm properties. He taught at UNLV as an adjunct professor and transitioned full

Julie Murray

'82 BA, '84 MA Communication Studies

Julie Murray's first act of volunteerism wasn't exactly voluntary.

It was the late 1970s, and she was a freshman at UNLV when a class required her to assist with a political campaign. Murray chose future Nevada Gov. Richard Bryan's bid for state attorney general. She so enjoyed the experience that the next semester she volunteered at a local facility for at-risk youth — only this time it wasn't mandated by any syllabus. Murray had found both a calling and a future profession.

For nearly three decades, Murray has tackled one social challenge after another in Southern Nevada. As president and CEO of the Three Square food bank, Murray now heads a multimillion-dollar nonprofit organization whose mission is as simple in theory as it is difficult in practice: ending hunger in Southern Nevada.

Even though Murray had plenty of experience in nonprofits, the number of hungry people in Las Vegas blindsided her five years ago. Eric Hilton, the son of hotelier Conrad Hilton, had commissioned a study that found four in 10 children in the valley struggled with hunger.

That was all Murray needed to hear. She left her job with Andre Agassi's charitable foundation to help launch Three Square. "It is such a quiet, hidden problem," she says. "When families and children are struggling with hunger, it's not something of which they're proud, and it's not something you can readily see."

One of the first entities she turned to for assistance was her alma mater. "If we were going to do something as big as trying to end hunger, we wanted to partner with an academic institution that could chart the progress, measure the data, and show what it would mean for our community if we really did significantly put a dent in hunger."

Here are just two ways in which UNLV has aided: The College of Allied Health Sciences did a "hunger-gap" ZIP-code analysis to determine which areas needed Three Square's services most. And, Molly Michelman of nutrition sciences heads a team that reviews the nutritional index of the food Three Square distributes.

SINCE ITS LAUNCH on Sept. 1, 2006, Three Square and its 265 agency partners have served up hundreds of thousands of meals to those in need, and they've done so from Tonopah in central Nevada all the way

to the southern tip of the state. Many of the meals are prepared fresh in Three Square's state-of-the-art, 5,000-square-foot kitchen, where an executive chef, an assistant, and as many as 20 volunteer chefs from local restaurants work each week.

THE THREE SQUARE NETWORK boasts a volunteer force of 3,000, including at least one UNLV graduate student intern each semester. Despite the economic downturn, Murray says volunteer numbers are actually rising. Her theory: Many people who are unemployed are trying to stay connected to the community, and they've found Three Square's mission is one worthy of their time.

Of course, the poor economy is having a negative impact as well. Donations are down just as the number of people in need of food is at its highest. Murray says that Three Square approved an annual \$8 million budget in November 2008, but it wasn't enough, mainly because many middle-class families are accessing social services for the first time. The number being served by Three Square and its partners has increased by about 50 percent this year.

The majority of those in need are children, many of whom qualify for free and reduced-price school lunches but have little access to food at night or on weekends. That led to the "Backpacks for Children" program, which distributes 3,700 backpack bags of food every Friday at 144 schools.

Certainly, it's a challenge to coordinate such a far-reaching program, not to mention managing two large warehouses, mapping out a game plan for 13 trucks to shop for food at 140 grocery stores each week, and working with 265 partners such as the school district, Catholic Charities, the Las Vegas Rescue Mission, and the United Way. That's when Murray's business skills kicks in.

"We run [Three Square] like a business where we're accountable for every dollar spent. We work efficiencies into everything we do, such as using technology wisely. And we also have those characteristics of a well-performing nonprofit such as compassion, sense of urgency for the people we're serving, and a feeling of gratitude for our donors."

That business plan appears to be catching on. Murray has been summoned to Washington, D.C. three times to speak before congressional panels on hunger relief. Three Square is looked at as a potential national model for food bank operations. —MATT JACOB



Photo: R. Marsh Starks

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time into culinary arts/management education in 2005 at the Art Institute of Las Vegas. He is pursuing a doctoral degree in educational leadership from Argosy University. He lives in Henderson.

Jill S. Kano, '85 BS Hotel Administration, left her hospitality career with Marriott Hotels in May after eight years to pursue a master's degree in environmental science and policy at Columbia University. She lives in Astoria, N.Y.

Angela Hutchinson Roberts, '85 BS Hotel Administration, is the event sales and design manager at Pacific Event Productions.

Abbi Silver, '86 BA Political Science, was elected District Court judge. She previously served as a judge in Las Vegas Justice Court and in Municipal Court, and as chief deputy district attorney for the special victim's unit of the Clark County district attorney's office.

Thomas M. Ware II, '86 BA Political Science, was named a "2009 Southern California Super Lawyers" by *Los Angeles Magazine*. He and his wife, Marnie, have been married 16 years and have two children: a son, Kellen, and a daughter, Michael Christine. The family lives in Los Angeles.

Carl Cook, '88 BA Communication Studies, owns Cook Insurance Group, an independent insurance agency that provides auto, home, commercial, and health insurance. He serves on the PTA board for Mack Elementary School and on the board of directors for Little League. He coaches children's T-ball and basketball. He has run in more than 135 sprint triathlons and won his age group at the Ocean Shores Triathlon last year. He finished second in his age group at the 2008 Las Vegas Turkey Trot 5k run. He and his wife, Betty, have two children: Dakota, 7, and Devin, 4. The family lives in Henderson.

Karen Hall, '88 BA Communication Studies, was appointed to the Pennsylvania Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. She lives in Pittsburgh.

Mathew Harter, '88 BS Business Administration, was elected a judge in the Family Division of District Court. He is married and the father of seven. He lives in Logandale.

James P. Reza, '89 BA Political Science, co-owns Globe Salon, which recently achieved national recognition. The salon, in the downtown arts district, was named second runner-up by *Salon Today* in its 2009 Salon of the Year competition (June issue). It is the only Nevada salon ever to be recognized in the competition. Reza owns the salon along with his wife, Staci Linklater.

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1990s

Denver B. Forester, '90 BS Hotel Administration, invented an interactive game for the casino industry based on the popular premise of Risk/Reward. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office recently published his patent application for the casino wagering game. He lives in Carlsbad, Calif.

Jon Whittington, '90 BA Communication Studies, is executive vice president of retail lending at Central Pacific HomeLoans. He holds the Mortgage Bankers Association designation of Certified Mortgage Banker (CMB), the highest professional honor within the real estate industry. He is the first residential CMB in Hawaii. Before joining Central Pacific HomeLoans in 2008, he spent 10 years at Countrywide. He lives in East Honolulu.

Tiffany Roberts Bertram, '91 BS Hotel Administration, opened Tiffany's Bed & Breakfast. The log cabin home is located on 60 woodland acres outside Hot Springs, Ark. She lives in Bismarck.

Paul Servello, '92 BS Business Administration, '96 MBA, is chief financial officer of Alan Waxler Group. Golf is his hobby. He lives in Henderson.

Jim Geoffroy, '94 BS Business Administration, relocated from Denver to Bellevue, Wash., and was promoted to director of financial services with Verizon Wireless. He manages a 600-employee call center tasked with helping customers get current on their bills and with reducing customer turnover. He, his wife, and their three children live in Sammamish.

Tammy L. Neil, '94 BA Psychology, '98 Ed.S. and '01 Ph.D. Special Education, is in private practice as a licensed professional counselor. Hobbies include her family, flying, boating, and skiing. She lives in Carthage, Mo.

Robert Cortez, '95 Bachelor of Music, is director of bands and summer school site administrator for Mexico (Mo.) Senior High School. He also manages the district music festival. Previously, he spent 10 years as a band director with the Clark County School District. He and his wife, Mikelle, have three sons, Alex, 16, Ryan, 12, and Nicholas, 10.

Karen Beza-Hawkes, '96 BA Political Science, is an attorney practicing trademark, copyright, and corporate dispute litigation. She is a member of the California Bar Association, the American Bar

Association, the Association of American Trial Lawyer, the San Diego County Bar, and the Lawyers Club of San Diego. She is an animal rights activist and volunteers at the Coronado Senior Center. She and her husband, attorney David Hawkes, are art collectors and enjoy traveling. They live in Coronado.

Rachel Ego Conneely, '96 BS Hotel Administration, is director of operations at TheClub at Cordillera and is responsible for three full-service clubhouses. Since moving to Colorado in 2006, she has enjoyed the mountain lifestyle. She lives in Edwards.

Larry Lee, '96 MBA, is deputy director of the Washington State 529 Prepaid Tuition Program, a guaranteed tuition program. He is completing his master of public administration degree at the University of Washington-Seattle. Hobbies include scuba diving, traveling, volunteering, and singing. He and his wife, Kandace, have two children, Michelle and Bryan. The family lives in Olympia.

Ashley Skylar, '96 BS Special Education, '99 Master of Education, '04 Ph.D. Special Education, is a professor at California State University, Northridge. Her research interests include distance education and technology for students with disabilities. She lives in Santa Monica.

Patricia Rosales, '97 BS Elementary Education, '00 Master of Education, is principal of Cambeiro Elementary School, overseeing professional development and school improvement. She has 12 years of experience in education and specializes in teaching pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade students. She was recognized by Cambridge *Who's Who* for showing dedication, leadership, and excellence in educational administration.

Paul D. Shapiro, '97 MA Criminal Justice, '00 Ph.D. Sociology, is a tenured professor in sociology at Georgia Southwestern State University. This fall he also became department chair. He lives in Americus.

Jessica Bridge, '98 BA Hospitality Administration, is a Realtor with RE/MAX North Professionals. She also is owner of 1/2 Lounge and Bevo, a food and bar catering company. She lives in Burlington, Vt.

Judy Jenner, '98 BS Management, '01 MBA, started her own translation and copywriting business with her twin sister, appropriately named Twin Translations. The boutique language services business specializes in English, Spanish, and German for the legal, financial, marketing, travel and tourism, and IT fields. Previously, she was the Spanish content manager for the VEGAS.com website. She is a 10-year board member

of *CLASS! Publications*, a monthly publication for high school students, and is a board member of the Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association. Hobbies include foreign-language literature, running half marathons, hiking, skiing, cooking, and traveling. She is married to **Keith Anderson**, '02 MBA.

Jason Roth, '98 BA Communication Studies, and his wife, Grace, welcomed their second son, Zachary, in November. The family lives in Henderson.

Jean Lorenzo Witherow, '98 BS Hotel Administration, was a slot supervisor with the Bellagio before stepping down to become a wife and mother. She married Ryan Witherow in September 2005. They are proud parents of twins Timothy and Julianna.

Patrick L. Ferguson, '99 BA Environmental Studies, '03 MA Ethics and Policy Studies, is a bomb disposal supervisor for a U.S. Department of Defense contractor. He recently returned from working in the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, clearing a Korean War battlefield of unexploded ordnance.

Holly Sparks Lindsay, '99 BS Hotel Administration, received the Industry Champion Award from the Nevada Restaurant Association Education Foundation at the Nevada ProStart Completion Awards Dinner in February. She helped secure a donation of kitchenwares for ProStart schools from Emeril's Homebase. She and her husband, Robert, live in Henderson.

Mike Prince, '99 BS Education, had his first novel, *Toquop the Warrior Stallion*, published in 2007. It received the Academy of Western Artists' Will Rogers Medallion Award in the Western Fiction-Young Adult category and was a 2008 Arizona Book Award winner in the Juvenile/Young Adult Fiction category. He lives in Alamo and teaches math at Pahrangat Valley Middle School.

2000s

Leah Herner-Patnode, '00 Ed.D. Special Education, is a professor of special education at Ohio State University at Lima. She and her husband, Bill Patnode, are the parents of Anna Belle and Mary Frances. They live in Waterville.

William Keola Soon, '00 BS Physical Education, is the physical education teacher at Keller Elementary School. He has taught for the Clark County School District since 2007. From 2000-07 he taught middle school health and physical education in Hawaii. He is working on his master's degree in health promotion.

Mark Kiyojima, '00 BS Hotel Admin-

istration, is co-owner and operator of ProgressiveBar Las Vegas, a beverage consulting company. He also works as assistant banquet manager at the Red Rock Casino. Hobbies include traveling, snowboarding, and following mixed martial arts. He and his wife, Therese, have a miniature beagle named Sasha.

Monica R. Brown, '01 Ph.D. Special Education, has been a professor of special education and communication disorders at New Mexico State University for five years. Prior to that, she taught three years at the University of Kansas. Hobbies include international travel, reading, and watching college sports (especially basketball) and movies. She lives in Las Cruces.

Gail Clark Lorenzo, '01 BS Business Administration, and her husband, Dan, had their first child, a son, in August 2008.

John Paffrath, '01 BS Hotel Administration, left the hotel industry for commercial real estate. He works for Marcus & Millichap, specializing in sales of apartment buildings. He lives in California.

Kyler Elwell, '02 BA Sociology, '05 MS Chemistry, is a doctor. Upon graduating from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston in May, she was awarded the William H. Nash, MD, Endowed Award in Obstetrics and Gynecology. She has begun her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

Michele Farmer, '02 Master of Education, '08 Ed.D. Special Education, is an education professor at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. She is a yoga enthusiast and has rediscovered reading for fun since completing her doctoral degree.

Jon Castagnino, '03 BA Communication Studies and BS Sports Injury Management, is a reporter and anchor for FOX5. Previously, he worked as a sports anchor and reporter in Casper, Wyo., and in south Texas. He lives in Henderson.

Lindsay Stein Cohen, '03 BS Hotel Administration, opened her own event-planning firm, Designer Event Chicago.

Joseph Donalbain, '03 MA Political Science, is a U.S. Army major working in the strategic intelligence field. He is stationed in Seoul, Korea, where he is assistant chief of staff for intelligence. In 2003 he deployed to Iraq. He earned an MS in strategic intelligence from the National Defense Intelligence College in Washington, D.C. His thesis, "Failure of Intelligence or Failure of Leadership: Walton Walker and the Eighth Army Bug Out of 1950," was nominated for the 2006 Joint Chiefs of Staff Archival

Research Award. He and his wife, June, have two sons, Jacob and William "Wally" Wallace. He says they are pleased that the boys have become nearly fluent in Korean.

Joon Choi, '04 BS Hotel Administration, is an assistant general manager of the Palms West group. Previously, he worked with Smith and Wollensky and with Patina restaurants. He lives in New York City.

Kyle Konold, '04 Ph.D. Special Education, is vice president of academic affairs for TechSkills, a post-secondary training school with locations in 28 cities. He is married with three children. His children's activities keep him too busy for hobbies, but he does enjoy suspense novels.

L. Kathleen Jaske, '04 Master of Education, teaches French at Green Valley High School. She also is a novelist. Her fourth book, *Out of Phase: A Time Traveler's Chronicle*, was published last year. Hobbies include reading, running, fencing, singing, playing piano, hiking, and traveling. She lives in Henderson.

Ralph Thomas Piccirilli, '04 BS Hotel Administration, oversees both Main Street Station and the California Hotel and Casino during the graveyard shift. He also is in his second year of law school at the Concord School of Law. He lives in North Las Vegas.

Della Salazar, '04 BA Secondary Education, is a project facilitator for the equity and diversity department of the Clark County School District. Hobbies include biking, running, and reading. She lives in Moapa.

Seth G. Grabel, '05 BS Hotel Administration, is a professional magician. He is the opening act for The Amazing Johnathan at the Harmon Theater at Planet Hollywood.

Aaron Greene, '05 BA Political Science, is a network engineer for the Vermont department of information and innovation. He also is a senior airman with the Vermont Air National Guard. In 2008, he earned a master's degree in information assurance from Norwich University. Hobbies include working on his new house and playing hockey. He lives in Northfield.

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Valentini Kalargyrou, '05 Master and '09 Ph.D. Hotel Administration, joined the hospitality management faculty of the Whittemore School of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire. Previously, she worked as a human resources project manager at the MGM Grand.

Evangeline Bulla, '06 MS Mechanical Engineering, lists her hobbies as singing, hiking, and dancing. She lives in Hyd, India.

Tom Hartley, '06 Master of Hospitality Administration, just completed his MBA at the University of Connecticut. He and his wife, Jennifer, have a daughter in high school and a son at the University of Connecticut. They live in Griswold.

Robyn E. Mathis, '06 BS Hotel Administration, is sales & marketing manager at the Hard Rock Cafe. Previously, she was the sales director at AWG, a local destination management and transportation company.

Bryson Perkins, '06 JD, has opened his office, Perkins Law, in Idaho. Previously, he clerked for Judge Joel Horton in Idaho and worked as a deputy prosecutor for Canyon County. He and his wife, Jamie, have three children: Nathan, Lily, and Kayla. They live in Caldwell.

Brian E. Shedd, '06 Master of Hospitality Administration, is corporate vice president of the Radiate Group, a holding company of 19 marketing service agencies worldwide. Previously, he

worked as a marketing vice president with Mandalay Resort Group for five years. He lives in Dallas.

Rob Taylor, '06 MS Hotel Administration, is director of housekeeping at the Westin Cincinnati. Previously, he worked for MasterCorp Inc. as employee development manager and in various rooms operations roles at the Hyatt Cincinnati; the Hilton Oceanfront Resort in Hilton Head, S.C.; and at the Hyatt Lake Las Vegas. Hobbies include Spanish literature, history, genealogy, theater, and following World Cup soccer, Johns Hopkins lacrosse, and BYU football. He and his wife, Eva, have three children: Sean, 15, Brad, 11, and Chloe, 7. They live in Amelia, Ohio.

Megan Dode, '07 BS Hotel Administration, is a personal assistant in Bend, Ore. She also is the chapter administrator for a chapter of the Young Presidents' Organization. Previously, she worked in the sales department of the Four Seasons Hotel Las Vegas.

Rebecca Hoffer, '07 BA Political Science, is working toward a master's degree in Middle East politics at the University of Exeter in England. She is considering joining the U.S. State Department and has begun the application process. After graduating from UNLV, she spent six months working at the U.S. Embassy in Morocco.

Lisa Young Thomas, '07 MS Hotel Administration, and **Nick Thomas**, '02 BS and '06 Master of Hospitality

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Administration, were married July 24, 2008, at Marche Bacchus. Both are doctoral students in the Hotel College and teach undergraduate courses. She is the sales recruiter and trainer at Bluegreen Resorts.

Jacob D. Montoya, '08 BS Hotel Administration, is assistant front office manager at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort & Spa. He began his career with Hyatt in 2001 and worked at the Hyatt Tamaya when he was a student. He has obtained experience in several rooms division areas, including PBX, reservations, concierge, front desk, guest services, housekeeping, and the spa. He lives in Santa Ana Pueblo, N.M.

DEATHS

Catherine Hansen DeLaTorre, '69 BS Education, died April 1 at her home in Amargosa Valley. She taught English as a Second Language, citizenship, and community education computer and art courses. From 1969-76, she taught speech and drama at Martin and Woodbury middle schools. She was secretary of the Amargosa chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary and the Amargosa Red Hat Society. She is survived by her sons, Tim, Chuck, and Dan; a daughter, Monica Keenan; 13 grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Angela Farrar, a professor in the College of Hotel Administration, died Aug. 21. She began working at UNLV in 1999 and researched human resource management and diversity. Her professional affiliations included International Council on Restaurant and Institutional Education, Certified Hospitality Educators, the Society for Human Resource Management, and the Coalition of Black Meeting Planners. Survivors include her parents, Andrew L. and Mavis Wray Farrar, and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.



Dennis Finfrock, first executive director of the Thomas & Mack Center and first head coach of wrestling, died July 18 from complications of Parkinson's disease. He first came to UNLV in 1976 to head the wrestling program. After four successful seasons, he was named assistant athletic director. He spent nine years as executive director of the T&M. In 1992 he moved to the MGM Grand Garden Arena as vice

president of special events. In 1995 he was named the most influential person in local sports by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. In 2007 he was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and the Professional Bull Riders Hall of Fame. He is survived by his wife, Kay, and son Jason, associate director of the T&M.

Glenn "Gondo" Gondrezick, the former Runnin' Rebel star forward, NBA player, and longtime radio and TV announcer, died April 27, seven months after a heart transplant. A business major while at UNLV, he starred on the Rebels' first Final Four team in 1977. He ended his UNLV career as the 16th-leading scorer with 1,311 points. His jersey, No. 25, was retired in 1997. He was a second-round NBA draft pick and played with the New York Knicks (1977-79) and Denver Nuggets (1979-83). He then played two years in Europe. For the past 17 seasons he had served as a radio and television analyst for UNLV. He is survived by daughter Britt and sons Kelan and Travis. A memorial celebrating his life took place April 30 in the Thomas & Mack Center.

Richard Lee, vice provost for education outreach, died May 11. In his five years at UNLV, he helped build the largest distance education, continuing education, and summer programs in Nevada. He was described as a selfless advocate of better learning and scholarship for faculty and students. Prior to UNLV he was a dean at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater.

Reuben Neumann, professor emeritus of accounting, died May 4. He moved to Las Vegas in 1962 to teach at UNLV and retired in 1993. He also had his own CPA tax practice and briefly served on the Clark County Planning Commission. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Mary; three children, son Jason, and daughters Stephanie Callewaert and April Neumann-Aquino; four granddaughters; two sisters; and a brother.

Malcolm Foertner Nicol, professor of chemistry and physics and executive director of the High Pressure Science and Engineering Center (HIPSEC), died May 7. He had taught at UNLV since 1998. HIPSEC, established in 1998, brings together chemists, mechanical engineers, and physicists to research materials under high pressure. His research with HIPSEC colleagues included more than \$20 million of support from the U.S. Department of Energy and other agencies.

Stephen Forbes Nielsen, emeritus professor of communication studies, died March 25. He began teaching at UNLV in 1969 and retired in 1998. An accomplished whistler, he was able to recall and recite great works of literature and poetry. He is survived by his wife, Ada MarDean; daughters, Cathi Parry, Suzanne, Cindy Ord, and Becky Bush; nine grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and two sisters.

Norval Pohl, former dean of the College of Business and vice president of administration and financial affairs, died in May following a battle with cancer. He most recently had served as chief academic officer of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He is survived by his wife, Barbikay; sons Prescott and Chandler; grandson Tennessee; a brother; and a half-brother.



J. Michael Stitt, an English professor who had taught at UNLV since 1981, died July 16 in an accident involving an ultralight aircraft. He taught courses in mythology, folklore, the epic, and world literature and was the undergraduate coordinator in the English department. In 1997 he was appointed as a senior Fulbright Lecturer at the University of Sofia in Bulgaria. He was the author of the book, *Beowulf and the Bear's Son: Epic, Saga, and Fairytale in the Northern Germanic Area*. He is survived by his wife, Emire, and a son, Vesko Dinev.



William R. Wells, founding dean of the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering, died May 22 following a long battle with cancer. He led the engineering and computer science programs through a period of growth in doctoral programs and research activities, which included the formation of the college in 1988. He was a member of the California-Nevada Superspeed Train Commission. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Margie; three sons, Ward, Winston, and Richard; four grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; and a sister.

Anne Fenton Wyman, the first female faculty member in the College of Sciences and the first faculty member in the geology department, died June 23 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. She also was the first woman to graduate from Case Western Reserve University with a geology degree. She taught here for 28 years, establishing the first geology degree curriculum. She visited more than 80 countries and was fluent in French and Spanish. She is survived by her husband of 61 years, Richard, son William, two grandsons, and a sister.



Pioneers in Bronze

Miguel Rodriguez's centerpiece for the new Pioneer Wall memorial captured a woman of her time: Maude Frazier in her ubiquitous cat's-eye glasses, button earrings, and closely cropped hair. But she's hardly dated, he says. "My studio pieces are figurative; I just do them without thinking much about the larger context for the piece," says Rodriguez, '04 MFA. "Doing this project, I learned a lot about people like Maude and what a debt we owe them and their relevance in our community even now."

The first woman to head a Nevada public school system, Frazier was instrumental in establishing what would become known as UNLV. Pioneer Wall was built around a fragment of the original Maude Frazier Hall, UNLV's first building. It also includes Rodriguez's bronze portraits of James R. Dickinson, the first faculty member and administrator here; and Donald C. Moyer, who as president led efforts to win autonomy from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Visit the memorial at the main entrance to campus at Maryland Parkway and Harmon Avenue. Rodriguez's work can also be found at Clark County Wetlands Park, which commissioned him to do large concrete sculptures of a beaver, toad, and snake.



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Celebrate Homecoming

Gather your family and friends, get out your scarlet and gray, and celebrate with fellow Rebels—it's time for homecoming.

Check out these can't-miss events:

Rebel Red Day | Friday, Oct. 16

Show your pride by wearing your Rebel red and join this citywide celebration.

Alumni Association Homecoming Dinner | Friday, Oct. 16 • Cocktails at 6 p.m.

Come celebrate the heroes who bring honor to UNLV and make a difference in our community.

Visit alumni.unlv.edu/events for details.

Runnin' Rebels First Look '09 | Friday, Oct. 16 • 9 p.m.

Join the UNLV Runnin' Rebels at the Thomas & Mack Center for the first basketball practice of the season.

Tailgate & Parade | Saturday, Oct. 17 • Tailgate at 4 p.m., Parade at 5 p.m.

Enjoy food, drinks, and the annual parade at the Alumni Association's homecoming tailgate inside the Rebel Experience at Sam Boyd Stadium.

UNLV vs. Utah | Saturday, Oct. 17 • 7 p.m.

Cheer on the Rebels as they play Utah.

For a complete list of homecoming events, visit homecoming.unlv.edu.